

Protecting Young People From Alcohol Related Harm

FULL REPORT
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Research by Design Ltd

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
Licensing Case Studies	1
LICENSING EVALUATION STUDY OF BLACKPOOL	9
Blackpool's multi-agency approach to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder	9
Licensee survey for Blackpool	19
Summary evaluation for Blackpool	27
LICENSING EVALUATION STUDY OF LANCASHIRE.....	29
Lancashire's multi-agency approach to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder	29
Licensee survey for Lancashire	40
Summary evaluation for Lancashire	48
LICENSING EVALUATION STUDY OF BRIGHTON & HOVE	49
Brighton & Hove's multi-agency approach to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder	49
Licensee survey for Brighton	59
Summary evaluation for Brighton & Hove	67
LICENSING EVALUATION STUDY OF COMMUNITY ALCOHOL PARTNERSHIPS	68
Cambridgeshire's multi-agency approach to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder	68
Licensee survey for Cambridgeshire	75
Summary evaluation for Cambridgeshire	81
LICENSING EVALUATION STUDY OF ABERYSTWYTH.....	82
Aberystwyth's multi-agency approach to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder	82
Licensee survey for Aberystwyth	90
Summary evaluation for Aberystwyth	97
LICENSING EVALUATION STUDY OF THE UNDER 21 BAN	98
Background to the Under 21 Ban	98
Licensee survey for the Under 21 Ban areas	103
Summary evaluation of the Under 21 Ban	109
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	110
Closing remarks	110
APPENDIX	114
Rationale of National Indicators	115

Executive Summary

Licensing Case Studies

In the second half of 2008, LBRO commissioned Research by Design Ltd to review a number of work-based projects focused on: preventing underage access to alcohol; improving compliance with The Licensing Act 2003¹; and reducing the burdens of alcohol-related harm on society.

To provide some background to these projects and put the issues of alcohol misuse in context, the National Audit Office claims² that more than 10 million people are regularly drinking above the guidelines set by Government, and many of these are likely to suffer ill-health or injury as a result. Further, it reports that hospital admissions for the three main alcohol specific conditions (alcohol-related liver disease, mental health disorders linked to alcohol and acute intoxication) more than doubled in the 11 years between 1995-96 and 2006-07 from 93,459 to 207,788, although this is in the context of a general rise in admissions of about a third over the same period. There were 8,758 deaths from alcohol-related causes in the UK in 2006, twice as many as there were 15 years before.

In July 2008 the Department of Health estimated that alcohol misuse costs the health service around £2.7 billion per year³. However it does not stop there; it also imposes wider costs on society, such as crime and disorder, social and family breakdown, and sickness absence. In terms of crime, the 2007/8 British Crime Survey reports that in the case of 45% of violent incidents the victim considered the offender to be under the influence of alcohol. Based on the survey findings, it estimates that there were 947,000 incidents of alcohol-related violence in 1999 (defined as assaults, robbery and snatch thefts in which the victim considered the perpetrator to be 'under the influence' of alcohol). Thus, the total annual cost of alcohol misuse to the UK economy has been calculated by the Cabinet Office at up to £25.1 billion⁴.

In respect to young people, the Department for Children, Schools and Families reports⁵ that although the proportion of 11 to 15 year olds who drink alcohol regularly is falling (from 28% in 2001 to 21% in 2006), the average weekly consumption of drinkers in this age range has increased very sharply. The number of units consumed by these young people is said to have doubled between 1990 and 2000 and has remained at the same level since.

The work-based projects reviewed by Research by Design Ltd were selected to provide examples of good practices developed by local enforcement authorities across the UK. Those reported in this document are by no means exhaustive. They are however varied and cover a range of initiatives, from zero tolerance and firm action against those selling alcohol to young people to more educational and supportive responses to licensees, parents and school children. They also span a number of National Indicators, specified in the Local Area

¹ The Licensing Act 2003 (The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 comes fully into force on 1st September 2009) requires local licensing authorities to regulate the sale and supply of alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshments and, in so doing, address the four statutory licensing objectives of: preventing crime and disorder; public safety; preventing public nuisance; and protecting children from harm (there is a fifth objective in Scotland – protecting and improving public health). However, since its implementation, a Government evaluation of its impact (DCMS Evaluation of the Impact of the Licensing Act 2003) has found that the Act could be used more effectively in conjunction with other interventions as part of a coherent and effective strategy to achieve wider outcomes. These include a reduction in alcohol related crime, binge drinking and underage alcohol consumption.

² http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0708/reducing_alcohol_harm.aspx

³ http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Healthimprovement/Alcoholmisuse/DH_085387

⁴ http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/NI1/Newsroom/DG_170745

⁵ Youth Alcohol Action Strategy <http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/Cm%207387.pdf>

Agreements (LAAs), the central 'delivery contracts' between central government and its partners in England and now the only mechanism where central government agrees targets with local government.

The details of the projects documented in this report were gathered from the local authorities and police responsible for developing initiatives to reduce underage access to alcohol, published information that is available in the public domain and an independent telephone survey undertaken by Research by Design Ltd.

The remainder of this section of the report provides a short summary of each of the projects. Fuller details are given in the main body of the report.

Blackpool has a thriving and vibrant night-time economy. Once seen by planners as the answer to troubled town centres, pubs, clubs and bars are often a major focal point for alcohol-related harm, and Blackpool is no exception. With 130 on-licence premises in a compact town centre of approximately one square mile and 1900 across the authority, one for every 72 residents, it suffers from high levels of alcohol-related harm relative to its size of population. 105,000 working days are lost a year in Blackpool due to alcohol misuse, costing upwards of £10.5 million per annum.

Blackpool has adopted a multi-agency approach to reduce crime and disorder and promote safety in its night-time economy. A zero tolerance approach to underage sales has seen compliance levels leap from 63% in May 2008 to 93% by November 2008. Licensees caught selling to underage young people on two or more occasions in a three month period are referred to the Licensing Committee for a licence review. In 2007/08 forty three licensed premises were subjected to review, resulting in two revocations, thirty nine suspensions of between two and eight weeks with extra conditions imposed and two licences having additional conditions imposed.

This zero tolerance regime is clearly apparent to licensees: 97% of those interviewed in the business survey are aware of enforcement through the test purchase regime and 89% believe the approach to be effective. The survey also indicates that at least nine in every ten licensees feel the Think/Challenge campaigns, extended use of CCTV, support with identifying fake IDs, provision of advertising and training materials and high visibility policing are effective initiatives for tackling underage sales and alcohol fuelled anti-social behaviour in Blackpool.

In the other parts of **Lancashire**, a slightly different approach has been taken. In 2004 Lancashire County Council recognised that around half of the districts within the county were worse than the national average for health issues linked to alcohol. In response, a three year initiative was established – Alcohol: Protecting Children and Improving Communities. This used a multi-agency team to take a holistic approach to the problem and produce education materials for teachers, a website for primary schools, an alcohol awareness teaching package for secondary schools, a pupil's alcohol conference and a campaign aimed at raising awareness with parents.

Lancashire has adopted a high profile media campaign, undertaken extensive consultation with 9 to 13 year olds, provided support to licensees through training seminars, an interactive DVD package and an option for traders caught selling to underage youngsters to attend an age restricted products training course rather than receive a fixed penalty or go to court.

Results from the business survey indicate that information is filtering through to licensees; almost three-quarters feel they are well informed about the progress and successes of the initiatives being run in Lancashire, though only around a half are aware of training courses to support them. It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that less than six in ten licensees feel they

are well supported by the local authorities in dealing with underage sales given the greater emphasis and support provided in educating young people.

In order to measure retailer compliance, Trading Standards has conducted between 370 and 600 alcohol test purchases annually, and has seen compliance rise from 74% in 2005/06 to 89% in 2007/08. Lancashire is also targeting those who buy alcohol and pass it on to underage young people through their Campaign Against Proxy Sales (CAPS). Awareness of this scheme amongst licensees is relatively high; roughly three-quarters claim they are know of it and over four-fifths believe it is effective.

On the south coast, **Brighton and Hove** is another area with a thriving night-time economy and a high concentration of licensed premises. It has a high youth population and has suffered from problems such as street drinking and alcohol misuse. In 2002 a project was devised to tackle these problems, resulting in the Home Office led Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaigns and the Tackling the Underage Sales of Alcohol to Children Campaigns. The Police have worked closely with the Council and have introduced Designated Public Place Orders enabling them to confiscate alcohol from people drinking in the street. They have targeted “kids drinking parties” often taking those most drunk home, demanding that parents exert discipline to discourage alcohol consumption and liaising with schools and social services where parents appear unsupportive. Trading Standards offer advice and support to licensees through Business Support Visits, helping them consider the location of alcohol in the premises, building up staff confidence to challenge and refuse sales and generally raising awareness of underage issues.

However, awareness of these visits is limited amongst the licensed trade. The business survey suggests that whilst the majority of those who have been found to have sold alcohol to those underage have received a Business Support Visit, most others are unaware of them. Just 1% of non-offending licensees are aware that they could receive a visit if they are found to sell alcohol to underage persons; 74% would expect a fixed penalty notice.

Test purchasing exercises over the past two years have produced a variety of compliance rates, but since February 2008 compliance has increased from 52% to 81% in November 2008. Little re-offending by licensees is now reported, enabling officers to target newly licensed premises. The Community Safety Forum reports a reduction in serious violence of 16.7%, a fall in assaults with less serious injuries of 16.1% and a 4% reduction in patients attending A&E as a result of an assault.

Trading Standards and the Police have jointly undertaken an intelligence gathering operation to quantify the problem of proxy purchases, provide a clear message to the public and identify the types of premises adults prefer to purchase from. By engaging young volunteers to ask members of the public to buy alcohol for them, they were able to intercept those agreeing before the offence was committed and issue a warning. From a total of 29 requests, 11 members of the public agreed to buy alcohol. Most went to a convenience store in preference to a dedicated off-licence to make their purchase.

The officers at Brighton have found that young people are prepared to travel across the city to source premises from where they can purchase alcohol, commonly targeting off-licences in the summer months and on-licences in the winter. To gain access to alcohol they use fake identity cards, cajole vulnerable adults to purchase on their behalf and steal, where necessary.

In **Cambridgeshire**, a pilot Community Alcohol Partnership commenced in September 2007 in the town of St. Neots. This was formed to tackle underage alcohol consumption and the associated harms to health and safety. A similar Partnership was formed in Cambridge City in July 2008. Both Partnerships bring together a variety of interested agencies to work

collaboratively to tackle alcohol related problems, such as anti-social behaviour and other forms of alcohol related crime. The project provides education and training to retailers, young people and adults. Enforcement patrols deal with young people attempting to buy alcohol and adults buying on their behalf.

Trading Standards Officers support licensees by providing them with telephone numbers of the patrol agencies to report underage attempted purchasers and proxy purchasers, enabling officers to respond promptly. They also work with store managers, positioning themselves in stores to advise on reasons why an attempted purchase has been refused. The schemes aim to bring about positive changes that can be seen and felt by each local community. Success has been measured through a retailer survey and alcohol related litter collections – down 90% between September 2007 and March 2008. A comparison of the period January to April 2008 with the corresponding period in 2007 shows there also to be a reduction of incidents of anti-social behaviour of 2% over the five wards of St. Neots and of 45% in a major hot-spot area.

The business survey results also indicate that licensees consider the initiatives as positive methods of tackling alcohol-related issues. Licensees in Cambridgeshire are the most engaged of all those surveyed; 94% say they are well informed of the progress and successes of the local initiatives and the same proportion feel well supported by their local authorities.

In the university town of **Aberystwyth** in Mid-Wales there was a feeling amongst local people that the town was becoming a No-Go area at night. With over 79 on-licence premises and 22 off-licences, the 8,000 university students had no shortage of places to go for a drink. Following a stakeholder event in May 2008, a multi-agency approach was taken and a Night Time Economy Co-ordinator seconded from within Ceredigion County Council to ensure the agreed action plan was delivered. The biggest identified problem was noise late at night as people made their way home through residential parts of the town. A Sshhh campaign was introduced and noise complaints have dropped.

Improved communication between the licensees, the Police, the university and the Council has enabled the Police to be aware of forthcoming events in the town that may lead to increased anti-social behaviour. This advanced notification enables the relevant agencies to take a proactive approach, plan and allocate appropriate resources, rather than having to react to problems as they arise. Indeed, nine in ten licensees recognise that the 'Behave or be Banned' initiative was introduced by the local authorities to tackle alcohol-related anti-social behaviour in on-licensed premises, whilst three-quarters are aware of the high visibility policing to discourage crime and disorder. Street pastors work with enforcement officers and the Police late at night to help those who have drunk to excess, by providing water, tea and coffee, arrange taxis and even free flip flops for those who have lost their shoes!

Proof of age cards are provided to secondary school and college pupils free of charge and licensees are encouraged to always ask for ID if they are unsure as to a person's age. Interestingly, four in every five licensees believe that guidance on identifying fake ID's could help them avoid selling alcohol to underage persons in the future. Two local sports shops provide proof of age cardholders with a discount and this is considered an added incentive for young people to apply for a card.

Underage sales test purchasing has shown a compliance level in December 2008 of 60%, and the Police advise that reports of anti-social behaviour had reduced towards the end of 2008.

Where communities in England and Scotland have experienced problems with youths hanging around shop doorways, pestering and intimidating customers to buy them alcohol and threatening staff, some areas have introduced voluntary Under 21 Bans. These have tended to operate on Friday and Saturday evenings between 16:00 hours and closing time and have applied only to off-licences. Anyone under the age of 21 years is prohibited from buying alcohol from the outlets taking part. One village in Hampshire has increased this to 25 years of

age. As a result, over half of the licensees questioned in the business survey believe that staff and customer safety has subsequently improved.

Cleveland Police piloted a voluntary Under 21 Ban over a three month period in 2006 in Saltburn on Sea to address a local problem of youths being in possession of alcohol, anti-social behaviour, public disorder and low level crime. At the end of the pilot the Police reported a reduction in complaints about nuisance and rowdiness and also in the amount of alcohol seized from youngsters on the street. Retailers voted to keep the ban in place, and since then the scheme has been rolled out to neighbouring towns in Redcar and Cleveland.

The Cleveland model was adopted in both **Armadale** and **Stenhousemuir** in 2008. In Armadale, a voluntary six week pilot ban was introduced along with a Challenge 25 policy, whereby anyone appearing under the age of 25 was asked to produce some evidence of age. A robust enforcement approach of reporting offending retailers to the Procurator Fiscal and to the district council Licensing Board was also taken, and assisted in driving up test purchase compliance rates to 82%. During the period of the ban the number of calls received relating to youths and alcohol use is reported to have reduced.

Although licensees were positive about the ban and wished to continue with the scheme at the end of the pilot, two premises that were part of larger chains were instructed by their head office not to continue their participation. As it was agreed that all retailers in the area would need to take part for the scheme to be successful, the initiative was discontinued by all but one retailer.

Operation Floorwalk, however, a scheme introduced in Armadale in 2007 that involves youths found in possession or under the influence of alcohol being taken to the Police Station continues. Youths are taken there to ensure their safety as well as to establish how they came into possession of the alcohol. Their parents are also summoned to the station and together they meet with senior Police Officers and representatives of the West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service and the Youth Action project. It is claimed that most youths who have been through this experience have reduced their consumption of alcohol.

Alongside the six month pilot ban in Stenhousemuir, the Police introduced a bottle marking scheme that allowed bottles to be traced back to a retailer, a ring-round early warning telephone scheme that allowed retailers to share intelligence about youths in the area and underage test purchasing. In the first three months of the ban the police reported a 40% drop in calls about anti-social behaviour, although over the six month period the overall reduction was 16%. In terms of test purchasing, only one underage sale was made and consequently test purchasing became a low priority, allowing Police time and resources to be used elsewhere.

Hampshire Police also introduced an Under 21 Ban in the Coxford area of Southampton in 2008. Coxford has a high level of anti-social behaviour related damage and it was not unknown for 18 year old youths to purchase cases of lager and share them out to 15 and 16 year olds in the park. A voluntary agreement was reached with fifteen off-licences in the area, and the ban resulted in youths moving away from the shops and a generally positive feedback from the public. However, despite the success of the ban it was suspended after only two months due to the non-participation and withdrawal of two national supermarkets.

The introduction of Under 21 Bans has caused much debate within trade organisations and enforcement bodies, particularly after the Scottish Government issued a consultation paper⁶ that proposed to increase the age of purchase of alcohol from off-licences from 18 to 21. In March 2009 it then published "Changing Scotland's relationship with alcohol: A Framework for

⁶ "Changing Scotland's relationship with alcohol: a discussion paper on our strategic approach"

Action” which states an intent to legislate to place a duty on Licensing Boards to consider raising the minimum age for off-sales purchases within all or part of their area to 21 when they are reviewing their licensing policy statements. It also enables Licensing Boards to apply such a condition without requiring a hearing in respect of all the premises concerned and to give the Chief Constable or the local Licensing Forum powers to request that their local Licensing Board consider the matter of an age restriction at any time. These proposals are despite much opposition to the idea of increasing the minimum age to 21.

Challenge 21 and Think 21 are national schemes introduced into pubs and retailers and used widely by the trade to prevent underage sales of alcohol. Members of the Retail Alcohol Standards Group have adopted Challenge 25, which is similar but applies a higher age at which shop staff require customers to produce proof of age when attempting to buy alcohol. Training on the schemes provided to the retail trade by the local authorities covers acceptable forms of proof of age, identification of false IDs, and the details required in a refusals book.

Conclusions

This study has enabled us to explore the different initiatives employed to reduce underage sales and prevent alcohol getting into the hands of the under 18's. These initiatives often lead to a reduction in anti-social behaviour and can make communities better places to live, particularly on Friday and Saturday evenings. Some of the approaches are resource intensive and sustainability must be a consideration. However the fluctuating levels of compliance suggest that licensees need to be regularly reminded of their responsibilities to ensure staff are trained and have the confidence and ability to challenge young customers.

It is not uncommon in certain parts of the retail trade to have a high turnover of staff. It is therefore important for these licensees to have processes in place to ensure that new staff receive the right training and that existing staff receive refresher training on a regular basis.

Initial feedback suggests that licensees feel as much a victim of underage sales as the local community, and require the support of Trading Standards and the Police to stop young people gaining access to alcohol. Where officers have worked with and supported local licensees there is a feeling of collaboration towards a common aim and they have been keen to pass on intelligence about attempted purchases and attempted proxy sales.

There have been impressive increases in compliance levels in areas where much effort has been put into educating the local community from primary school age upwards and where test purchases have been conducted amongst 15% or more of all licensed premises. The introduction of voluntary Under 21 Bans in parts of the UK have proved a cost effective measure that can be introduced relatively quickly to stop young people gaining access to alcohol and discourage them from intimidating customers around shop doorways. The scheme has been popular with independent and regional off-licences (though not the national supermarkets) where all have participated, and the nature of the scheme means that results are visible and achieved quickly. It is debatable, however, whether this approach is sustainable in the long term and will produce the desired results.

What is clear is that local authorities and the Police must evaluate and review the problems in their own area and agree on the most appropriate action to resolve the issues. The examples contained in this document will provide Councillors, Chief Executives, the Police and local authority enforcement officers with the inspiration and guidance to apply some of the measures to the problems within their own boundaries with a view to improving the area for the good of the local community and protecting the young from harm.

Summary of National Indicators, Public Service Agreement Targets & other strategies & initiatives relating to Licensing Evaluation Studies

	Blackpool	Brighton & Hove	Cambridge-shire	Lancashire	Aberystwyth	Redcar/ Cleveland	Armada-le	Stenhouse-muir	Hampshire
NI 15 - Serious violent crime rate			✓						
NI 16 - Serious acquisitive crime rate			✓	✓					
NI 17 - Perceptions of anti-social behaviour		✓	✓			✓			✓
NI 20 - Assault with injury crime rate	✓	✓ Local		✓		✓			✓
NI 30 - Offending rates of prolific and priority offenders	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓
NI 32 - Repeat incidents of domestic violence	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
NI 39 - Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates		✓		✓		✓			
NI 115 - Substance misuse by young people	Linked measure					✓			
PSA 14 - Reduce the proportion of young people frequently misusing substances	✓								
PSA 23 - Reduce violent crime and disorder	✓								
PSA 25 - Reduce the % of the public who perceive drunk and rowdy behaviour to be a problem in their area	✓	✓							
Policing Plan					✓		✓	✓	
Single Outcome Agreement							✓		
Improvement Plan					✓				
Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy	✓	✓			✓				
Alcohol Strategy	✓		✓			✓	✓		
Project Objectives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Test Purchasing	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Business Support & Training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Think 21		✓	✓	✓	✓				
Young people education			✓	✓					

Notation:

NI - National Indicator

PSA - Public Service Agreement Target

Summary of National Indicators, Public Service Agreement Targets & other strategies & initiatives relating to Licensing Evaluation Studies

	Blackpool	Brighton & Hove	Cambridge-shire	Lancashire	Aberystwyth	Redcar/ Cleveland	Armadale	Stenhouse-muir	Hampshire
Adults / parents education	✓		✓	✓					
Training for elected members	✓								
Use Licensing review process	✓	✓					✓		
Trading Standards in store support			✓						
Under 21 Ban						✓	✓	✓	✓
Bottle Marking								✓	
Telephone network amongst traders								✓	
Telephone Numbers of Enforcement Patrol			✓				✓		
Child Protection Action & Support							✓		
Date Project Started	2005 Operation Ashamed May 2008	2002	Sept 2007	2004	April 2008	March 2006	March 2008	April 2008	Sept 2008

Notation:

NI - National Indicator

PSA - Public Service Agreement Target

Licensing Evaluation Study of Blackpool

Blackpool's multi-agency approach to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder

Project overview

This project uses a multi-agency approach to reduce crime and disorder and promote safety in the night-time economy of Blackpool, involving Trading Standards; Health & Safety, Environmental Health, Licensing; Lancashire Police; Lancashire Fire & Rescue; Licensed Trade; Hospitals; PCT and other partners of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Local Strategic Partnership. Through regular meetings, intelligence from complaints to the Police, Council officers and elected members and other information from Crimestoppers, a Whistleblowers telephone line, enforcement officers and the local community, is used to identify problem premises that will be the subject of enforcement activity.

Blackpool has devised its own process of risk assessment for premises that is tailored to their particular problems. A robust enforcement approach is used and offenders are reported for prosecution. Those premises that are found not to comply with the Licensing Act 2003 on more than one occasion are taken before the Licensing Committee by way of a licence review. Training of Councillors who sit on the Licensing Committee ensures that a consistent message is delivered through additional conditions, suspension or revocation of a premises licence.

Over an 18 month period this approach is reported to have achieved a reduction in alcohol-related crime⁷ and a reduction in sales of alcohol to underage youngsters.

Background

Blackpool has a thriving and vibrant night-time leisure economy. It has 130 on-licence premises in a compact town centre, an area of approximately 1 square mile, and across the entire town there is a total of 1900 on-licence premises: approximately one for every 72 residents.

Alcohol misuse in the Northwest region of England is reported to be the worst in the UK, and Blackpool has correspondingly high levels of alcohol-related harm (health, disorder, violence) relative to the size of its population. The health and wellbeing of the community and local services are strained. The alcohol industry brings some economic prosperity through employment, yet paradoxically 105,000 working days a year are lost in Blackpool due to alcohol misuse at an estimated cost upwards of £10.5 million per year.

Blackpool has widespread deprivation within the central wards of the town, and it is here that alcohol-related early death and illness are the highest. A combination of poor quality housing, lack of appealing employment, and low aspiration within the resident population makes alcohol a convenient pastime. Of the 180 off-licences (50% higher than the national average of 108 per licensing authority in England and Wales)⁸ half are in five of the six most deprived wards of the town. Alcohol-related domestic abuse is concentrated in these central wards and southern residential areas of the town.

⁷ Source: Julian Kearsley's "Blackpool Licensing Summit" Powerpoint presentation, September 2008

⁸ DCMS Annual Statistics 31st March 2008
http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/research/Number_of_Premises_Licences_and_Club_Premises_Certificates_by_licence_activity_authorised_2008.xls

In Blackpool, over half of all assaults are classified as alcohol-related, and in the wards of Talbot, Claremont and Bloomfield this peaks at 65%.

Blackpool has the highest ratio of off-licences per head of population and the second highest number of on-licences. There has been a reported unacceptable level of sales to underage young people from these; a series of test purchasing campaigns revealed 41% at its highest monthly level.

As a consequence a zero-tolerance approach has been taken to retailers who have sold alcohol to those underage and, since the start of the campaign in May 2008, sales to young people dropped to just 7% by November 2008.

National and local objectives

Alcohol consumption is an underlying cause of a number of social and economic problems across the town - alcohol-related health problems, teenage pregnancy, life expectancy and workforce exclusion rate. Alcohol is a major factor in Blackpool's reduced life expectancy⁹ which is reflected in excess mortality as a result of gastro-intestinal diseases.

Through the Local Area Agreement (LAA) Blackpool Council aims to strengthen the achievements it has made, taking a multi-agency response to tackling the negative impact of alcohol and taking early action especially through frequent contact with those at risk. As this health burden is not currently fully reflected in the recording of hospital admissions, a local hospital admission indicator has been developed for this LAA, which seeks to account for alcohol-related admissions. In addition, due to the very high levels of concern regarding alcohol misuse, the local indicators within the LAA¹⁰ monitor the breadth and depth of alcohol's impact on the wellbeing of the town whilst focusing on reducing alcohol consumption.

In Blackpool, alcohol-related crime currently accounts for 52%¹¹ of all violent crime in Blackpool and remains a significant driver across Blackpool generally. As a result, considerable pressure is placed on the police and health services in relation to arrests due to violent crime and criminal damage and people presenting at Accident & Emergency with alcohol-related injuries.

There is continuing focus on reducing the incidence of violent crime within the Blackpool area including the enforcement and monitoring of licensing regulations at troublesome venues and the recently introduced street drinking bans. Alcohol consumption is also a major contributing factor to violence against women, and statistics show that a third of incidents of domestic violence are related to alcohol in Blackpool. Hence **NI 20: Assault with Injury Crime Rate** and **NI 32: Repeat incidents of domestic violence** were chosen as important indicators for Blackpool's LAA.

The final indicator within the area of Community Safety is **NI: 30 Re-offending rates of Prolific and Priority Offenders**. This was selected because a correlation was thought to exist between alcohol-related violence and repeat incidence of domestic violence; a relatively small number of prolific offenders having a disproportionate effect on overall figures.

⁹ BSafe Blackpool Partnership. Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for Blackpool 2008-2011
<http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/democracy/members/admin/files/7ff9ccf6-37b4-41a5-a313-c7c607bafc06/appendix%205a.pdf>

¹⁰ LAA Submission Document: <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/4607338>

¹¹ Local Area Agreement Refresh June 2008, page 47 (<http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/8512814>)

Blackpool's LAA has twenty three improvement targets in addition to the sixteen early years targets selected from the National Indicator Set of 198 indicators which reflect local priorities¹².

Local strategies and plans

The Blackpool Strategic Partnership published its second 20 year Community Plan in 2004¹³. This sets out six delivery themes, two of which cover alcohol: the Healthy Lives strand aims to prevent ill-health through encouraging lifestyle change, and Safer Communities focuses on reducing the negative impact of drug and alcohol misuses on communities. These overarching strategies support Public Service Agreement (PSA) target indicators, e.g. PSA 25, and are being delivered through the Crime, Disorder and Drugs Strategy 2005-2008¹⁴, Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for Blackpool 2008-2011¹⁵, and the nationally driven "Safe. Sensible. Sociable". These strategies focus on improving:

- Effective law enforcement to tackle alcohol-fuelled crime and disorder, protect young people and tackle irresponsibly managed premises
- Identification of and treatment for the minority who experience problems with alcohol and who harm themselves, their families or communities
- Education and information for individuals to encourage them to shift away from the culture of getting drunk and towards a lifestyle where alcohol is enjoyed safely and responsibly
- Prevention and handling of alcohol-related crime and disorder
- Work with local alcohol retailers and the community to reduce alcohol related harm.

NB: Full action plans and updates can be viewed at www.besafeblackpool.com¹⁶.

Multi-agency project objectives

The objectives given to the multi-agency project that relate directly to alcohol are:

1. To reduce crime and disorder and promote safety in the night-time economy
2. To reduce the availability of alcohol sold to persons under the age of 18 years
3. To educate the licensed trade on responsible retailing
4. To provide educational packages to those who need support

Delivery of the multi agency project

A multi-agency approach is adopted, with each partner playing a vital role in ensuring the objectives are met. A summary of the key actions are as follows¹⁷:

¹² Blackpool Council Local Area Agreement Refresh June 2008

¹³ Community Plan: <http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/nr/rdonlyres/86266743-9153-4962-9e2e-bdcd16070c40/0/2bvisiondoc.pdf>

¹⁴ Crime, Disorder and Drugs Strategy 2005-2008: <http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/nr/rdonlyres/ba0b8c0b-a370-4622-a398-26bae5046ca1/0/crimedisorderdrugs.pdf>

¹⁵ Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy: <http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/democracy/members/admin/files/7ff9ccf6-37b4-41a5-a313-c7c607bafc06/appendix%205a.pdf>

¹⁶ Follow the alcohol link to access the action plan and updates

¹⁷ The full action plans can be found in the BSafe Blackpool Community Safety Plan 2008-2011 at: <http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/democracy/members/admin/files/7ff9ccf6-37b4-41a5-a313-c7c607bafc06/Appendix%205a.pdf>

Action	Lead	Why a priority	How success will be measured	Resources required
Training for Licensees, magistrates and Councillors	Head of Trading Standards, Councillors and Magistrates	Alcohol in the hands of under 18's causes harm to them, their families and the community	Less sales to under 18's Licensees who repeatedly break the law are stopped from trading	Magistrates, Councillors and officers time Training materials
Formulate a communication plan	Alcohol & Tobacco Officer	Traditional campaigns may not reach target audience	Different communication methods are used Audit of effectiveness	Partners and staff time. Supporting software Campaign costs
Support programmes for irresponsible parents who supply alcohol to their children without supervision	Alcohol & Tobacco Officer	Responsibility for young people drinking in public must lie with parents and not just enforcement authorities	Decrease in young people drinking in public	Officers time
Nightsafe relaunch	Licensing Department	It is imperative to reduce the impact of excessive alcohol consumption on health and violent crime	Reduction in levels of alcohol-related crime and disorder. Increased public awareness of Nightsafe	Funding
Operation Abstain	Licensing Department	To challenge the culture of selling to drunks	Reduced number of positive sales to drunks	Uniformed resources, funding, and support from licensees and door staff
Operation Handshake (Meet and greet for stag and hen parties)	Licensing Department	Sensible/ responsible/ drinking message/ code of conduct to stag and hen parties needs communicating	Increased refusal of drunks at point of entry and increased communication with target group Reduced levels of drunkenness	Funding

Action	Lead	Why a priority	How success will be measured	Resources required
Operation Abhorrent	Licensing Department	Aggressive test purchasing campaign aimed at underage sales from both pubs and off-licences	Increased prosecutions Increased restorative justice resolutions	Funding and partner involvement
Test Purchasing Operation Ashamed	Head of Quality Services/ Trading Standards	Alcohol sales to under 18's increase likelihood of binge drinking	Less sales made to under 18's	Staff time and funding
Robust enforcement leading to closures	Head of Quality Services	Problem premises contribute to disorder and irresponsible retailing	Number of licensed premises is reduced	Staff and partners time
Licensee Training	Head of Quality Services	Evidence that education of alcohol-related harm in children is needed	A programme of compliance training is devised and delivered	Staff time. Availability of Young Peoples Council. Start up funding
Seek revocation of licences of identified persistently poorly run venues	Principal Licensing Solicitor	Poorly run venues exacerbate well being of communities	Reduced off-licence and on-licence density especially in deprived areas	Staff time, Licensing time, legal guidance
Devise and implement policy on 48 hour closure notices	Principal Licensing Solicitor	Commercial penalties will encourage responsible retailing	Closure notices are observed Reduction in repeat breach of licensing laws	Staff time, Licensing time, legal guidance
Devise and implement saturation policy for off-licences across the whole town	Principal Licensing Solicitor Licensing Committee	Outlet density 50% above national average leads to issues for compliance	Policy implemented to refuse all new off-licence applications	Licensing time, legal research and guidance

Action	Lead	Why a priority	How success will be measured	Resources required
Reduce the number of off-licences	Councillors and Magistrates	Outlet density 50% above national average. Poor practice evident and less licences could be more robustly managed to ensure legal compliance	Policy in place and poorly run off-licences (e.g. selling to drunks or children) are closed down.	Time
Increase the presence of Licensing Enforcement team at peak activity periods.	Councillors	Hotels have taken over from clubs to provide 24 hour drinking	Increase in joint operations	Time

Trading Standards meet weekly with Lancashire Police to review progress and decide priorities for the week ahead. Partner agencies, such as the Primary Care Trust and Child Protection Officers meet bi-monthly to monitor progress with tobacco and alcohol strategies.

Details of Blackpool's operational initiatives follow.

Background to Operation Ashamed

In the Spring of 2007, Blackpool Council Trading Standards embarked on a series of test purchasing campaigns aimed at measuring the compliance levels of sales of alcohol to young people. By its very nature this work was conducted outside normal office hours and a team of young volunteers worked late into the evening with officers. This was extremely resource intensive for the small team at Blackpool Trading Standards.

The results were alarming. The number of sales of alcohol to under 18 year olds varied between 11% and in extreme months 41%, and it was decided that drastic measures needed to be implemented.

Off-licences were targeted as part of a series of operations and a zero-tolerance approach was taken to retailers who sold alcohol to those underage. This had the full support of the Police who reported that 72% of 10 to 17 year olds arrested in the town during 2007 for public order offences were drunk.¹⁸

Since the start of the campaign in May 2008 sales to young people have dropped from 41% to 7%. Operation Ashamed required that:

1. The Police no longer issued Fixed Penalty Notices (£80)
Fixed Penalty Notices were felt to water down the seriousness of the offence and were not having the desired effect. No accurate records of issued tickets were being kept, and repeat offenders could not be identified.
2. Licensing Reviews were sought after two sales to underage persons within 3 months

¹⁸

<http://www.blackpoolgazette.co.uk/blackpoolnews/Blackpool-could-restrict-number-of.4550815.jp>

For 2007/08 there were 43 premises licence reviews. This has resulted in two premises licence revocations, 39 licence suspensions of between 2 and 8 weeks with many additional conditions imposed, and 2 licences having additional conditions imposed.

3. Formal action against licensed premises was considered where sales took place to under 18s. This was not intended to criminalise the whole of the Blackpool licensed trade but to send out a clear message that selling alcohol without confirming the purchaser's age would not be tolerated. Offences have been prosecuted under S146 (Sale of alcohol to children) and S135 (Licence holder's duty to produce a licence) of the Licensing Act 2003. The penalties imposed have varied between conditional discharges to £600 fines and a criminal conviction.

Delivery of Operation Ashamed

A test purchase campaign was conducted each month over a four month period, commencing in May 2008. This entailed young volunteers attempting to purchase alcoholic drinks from off-licences across the Borough. The results are as follows:

Month	No of premises visited	No of underage sales	Level of compliance
May 2008	54	20	63%
July 2008	51	9	82%
September 2008	50	4	92%

The full results¹⁹ show that during 2008 a 10% improvement in compliance was achieved for alcohol sales to underage persons from off-licences, compared with 2007.

Blackpool has over 1900 on-licence premises, including hotels and small guest houses to support the visitor economy. It has approximately 180 off-licences, most concentrated in the poorest wards. Bloomfield ward, where alcohol-related deaths are the highest, is served by 30 off-licences, one for every 250 residents (all ages). Brunswick and Claremont wards also have high outlet densities and high levels of alcohol-related illness and death.

The nature of underage test purchasing is that considerable resources need to be deployed in order to safely measure compliance and not put the young volunteers at risk. Blackpool has over 30 volunteers who regularly help officers. Some are happy to test purchase alone and some prefer to go in pairs. Where a prosecution is likely the volunteers are paired up. There are four Trading Standards staff on each sales exercise. The Police often accompany officers in order to provide support.

The premises visited are selected using intelligence from both the Police and Trading Standards and geographic location. The compliance of premises is measured by repeatedly sending in volunteers to purchase alcohol throughout the year. Those found to be non-compliant are reported for prosecution and where sales have occurred on two or more occasions, representation is made for a Licence Review hearing by the Licensing Committee. Proceedings are taken mainly against the sales assistant, though this is dependent on a company's due diligence and the training and supervision of staff.

Evidence shows that in most cases there is a reduction in repeat offending, although this may be as a result of the ongoing compliance checking and the coverage by the local press.

¹⁹ Case Study Evaluations Appendices - Appendix A1

Business support

During August 2008, Trading Standards Officers worked with door staff at a nightclub in Blackpool after becoming concerned that under 18 year olds were gaining entry. Their involvement was with the full support of the management and door staff.

Over two nights, officers stopped around 24 people gaining entry after suspecting their proof of age documents were not their own. Officers sent a letter to the parents of those pulled in, while the people whose identification they were found to be using were asked to attend council offices for questioning. Some of those found trying to gain entry to pubs and clubs were as young as 15 and in possession of friends or relatives identification. Some of the juveniles had memorised details of the identification, such as date of birth and postcodes, and were able to produce convincing stories.

Additionally, officers have become concerned that there is an emerging problem with youngsters using fake IDs.

Success measures

The success of the project has been measured by the number of sales of alcohol to young people as part of the test purchasing exercise. Since the start of the campaign sales to young people have dropped from 37% in May 2008 to 8% in September 2008. This is well within the national average of 15%.

Removal of the Fixed Penalty Notice sanction has sent out a clear message to retailers and shop assistants that if they sell to underage young people they will face criminal proceedings and that a criminal conviction may have a detrimental effect on their future employment and they may be fined up to £5000.

Training

A range of training has been provided to retailers and parents by the Police, Licensing Officers and Trading Standards.

In August 2007 over 100 licensees from the off-licence trade attended a seminar at Yeadon Way Army Barracks. Since then training has been provided to sales staff and management of individual premises to enable them to meet the BIIAB²⁰ Level 2 National Certificate for Designated Premises Supervisors. Additionally, all offending licensed premises and those attending the training courses have been supplied with a comprehensive training CD-ROM, "No Proof of Age – No Sale".

Presentations have been given to elected members through the Licensing Committee Forums and officers attend the Blackpool Town Centre Pubwatch meeting enabling them to engage with licensees.

The young volunteers and staff are fully briefed prior to each test purchasing operation.

Blackpool have secured £5000 for training bar staff in 30 premises that failed test purchase checks. It is estimated that 125 staff will be trained to the BIIAB level 1 standard.

Costs

Test purchasing is carried out during the evenings, and resourcing this with adequate staff has been a key barrier to implementing Operation Ashamed. It is estimated that Operation Ashamed has cost about £9000, including the cost of alcohol purchases, staff and Police overtime. This is considered a significant cost and another barrier to implementing the operation.

²⁰ BIIAB – British Institute of Innkeepers Awarding Body.

The cost of training has been covered from existing budgets and is estimated to be about £5000.

Other operations

Operation Abstain

Over the past 12 to 15 months the Police have led a number of operations designed to identify pubs that continue to serve customers who have obviously drunk in excess. Plain clothes police officers have conducted surveillance exercises at target premises resulting in two prosecutions and a fixed penalty notice. The operation and subsequent actions raised awareness amongst licensees of the implications of serving customers who may be considered drunk.

Operation Handshake

For the past four years the Police have been stopping coaches coming into Blackpool as part of tackling drunken behaviour at stag and hen parties. Coach passengers are advised of the dangers of excess drinking and the consequences. This has been a low key operation and it has been difficult to measure any success that can be attributed solely to this action.

Saturation Policy

In October 2008, Blackpool commenced consultation on the introduction of a saturation policy for off-licences within the four wards that currently account for 50% of all the off-licences in the authority. The outcome is unlikely to be available until February 2009 at the earliest.

Lancashire Police Reducing Alcohol Harm²¹

In line with the launch of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy²² in 2007, Operation Nightsafe²³ has been re-launched as the Constabulary's tool for communicating alcohol harm related messages. This is to ensure that a clear and consistent approach is used when sharing messages with local people and visitors to the county to give maximum impact. The Constabulary is committed to working with partner agencies and local authorities, all of which have a responsibility to reduce both the criminal and social costs of excessive alcohol consumption.

Operation Summer Nights ran again in 2007 during July and August, and was responsible for an 11% reduction in alcohol-related crime in licensed premises, a 2.2% reduction in violent crime and a 14% reduction in criminal damage compared to the same period the previous year. A wide range of partners was involved in what has become a massive Lancashire-wide campaign, involving a total of 11,968 pro-active visits being conducted into licensed premises, for example.

Best Bar None was also launched in 2007 and the project, aimed at increasing the operating standards within licensed premises through positive recognition, resulted in 104 premises across the county reaching the standards expected by the responsible authorities. At an awards ceremony held in January 2008, over 300 representatives from the emergency services and the drinks industry were present as the best bars and nightclubs in the county were named as award winners.

²¹ Lancashire Constabulary: Chief Constable's Annual Report 2007-2008

http://www.lancashire.police.uk/fileadmin/users/documents/Full_Document.pdf

²² The strategy identifies the 5 key areas which (along with our partner agencies) we will target in order to achieve a reduction in the harm caused by excessive alcohol consumption as Enforcement, Education, Partnership, Industry Accountability and Media.

²³ Operation Nightsafe - <http://www.lancashire.police.uk/index.php?id=1793>

Over the past 12 months, the Police have taken part in three Home Office driven campaigns looking at underage sales of alcohol and serving alcohol to people who are already intoxicated. Representatives from the force are instrumental in influencing the alcohol agenda on both a regional and national level, with officers sitting on working groups at the Home Office.

An added benefit of these Operations has been the development of a closer working relationship with the licensed trade, who now recognise that Blackpool had a problem with alcohol sales to minors.

Press releases

Press releases, published most frequently by the Blackpool Gazette, were used extensively prior to the Operations and on their completion to inform local residents and the business community.

Other sources of information

Evaluation template completed by Glen Phoenix

Crime and Community Safety – <http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/FABC6BE3-B4EB-440D-87D9-4A82B4FBEE16/0/Crime.pdf>

Crime, Disorder & Drugs Audit 2004 - <http://www.bsafblackpool.com/docs/Alcohol.pdf>

Crime, Disorder & Drugs Audit 2004 Performance Review – <http://www.bsafblackpool.com/docs/PastPerformance.pdf>

Bsafe Blackpool – <http://www.bsafblackpool.com/partnership.htm>

Licensee survey for Blackpool

Background to the business survey

A short telephone survey was undertaken amongst licensees in the Blackpool area²⁴ during February 2009 to establish the extent of their awareness of the tools and initiatives being implemented by their local enforcement authorities to prevent underage sales of alcohol and alcohol-related crime and disorder, their effectiveness, usage and participation in the initiatives and those that might help them avoid sales to persons under the age of 18 in the future. It also explored issues around enforcement, whether they had been found to sell to young people, and actions that might be taken against them if they were to offend in the future.

In total 103 licensed premises were interviewed; 37 selling alcohol for consumption on premises, 61 selling alcohol for consumption off premises and 5 selling for consumption both on and off premises. 42 businesses are independents whilst 61 are part of a chain or franchise.

Where figures in tables do not sum to 100%, this is due to rounding.

Existence of problems in the area

All licensees recall alcohol-related problems in Blackpool; the most frequently mentioned problem being attempts by young people to buy alcohol.

Thinking back over the past two years, which of the following problems existed in your local area resulting in your local authority and the police developing initiatives to deal with them?	
Young people trying to buy alcohol	92%
Incidence of public disorder	61%
Intimidation and threats to staff	55%
Young people congregating around alcohol licensed premises	52%
Street drinking by young people	52%
Number of complaints received around anti-social behaviour	49%
Incidence of anti-social behaviour generally amongst young people	48%
Customers or members of the public being intimidated by young people	46%
Incidents of adults buying alcohol for young people	40%
Levels of alcohol-related litter (i.e. cans, bottles)	36%

Base: 99

Perhaps unsurprisingly, a greater proportion of off-sales licensees recall young people congregating around premises (58%) and adults buying for young people (51%) than on-sales licensees (38% and 26% respectively).

²⁴ The sample database from which licensees were drawn was provided by the local authority with additional sample sourced from Yell.com.

Nine in every ten licensees and their staff have experienced verbal abuse and six in ten have suffered threats and intimidation.

Which of the following has your business experienced?	
Verbal abuse of staff	90%
Threats/intimidation of staff	62%
Theft of alcohol by young people	41%
Violence towards staff	33%
Threats/intimidation of customers	30%
None of these	5%

Base: 87

Licensees' awareness of initiatives in Blackpool

The vast majority of licensees are aware of a range of initiatives being used in Blackpool to help address underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder. 97% are aware of the test purchasing regime and 96% the Think/Challenge campaigns (74% Think 21/ Challenge 21²⁵ and 63% Think 25/Challenge 25). 83% believe their local enforcement authorities are using posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials to inform staff of the issues.

Around seven in every ten are aware of the expansion of CCTV schemes, though this is heavy skewed towards on-sales, where 95% of licensees are aware of these schemes compared to 39% of off-sales licensees. Similarly, awareness of high visibility policing is greatest amongst on-sales licensees (83% compared to 58% of off-sales licensees).

Which of the following initiatives and tools do you think are being used by your local authority and the police to help licensed premises address underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?	
Enforcement through test purchasing, measuring compliance of licensed premises	97%
Posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials	83%
Think 21/Challenge 21	74%
Expansion of CCTV schemes (plus radio links and Pubwatch – for on-sales)	72%
Confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places	71%
High visibility policing to discourage crime and disorder	68%
Training courses	65%
Think 25/Challenge 25	63%
Support with the identification of fake IDs	60%
Guidance on alcohol advertising in licensed premises	53%
Appearing before local authority licensing committee for review of premises' licence	52%
Informing coach passengers entering Blackpool on stag and hen parties about the dangers of excess drinking	48%
Best Bar None Awards*	36%
Policy to encourage more family friendly licensed premises to the town centre	30%

* Asked to on-sale premises only; sample size 42

Base: 103

At the other end of the scale, just 36% are aware of the Best Bar None Awards and just 30% that there is a local policy to encourage more family friendly premises into the town centre.

²⁵ Rising to 86% amongst on-sales licensees and falling to 67% amongst off-sales licensees.

Effectiveness of initiatives

It is the Think/Challenge campaigns that score the highest when considering effectiveness of the initiatives running in Blackpool. Of those aware of these, 85% believe that they are *very effective* in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder, rising to 98% when considering effectiveness overall (those saying *very* or *fairly* effective).

Roughly nine in ten also feel that the expansion of CCTV, including radio links and Pubwatch for on-sales premises, support with identifying fake IDs, training courses, publicity materials, high visibility policing and test purchasing are effective overall.

How effective would you say [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?							
	Think 21/25 - Challenge 21/25	Expansion of CCTV scheme	Support with identifying fake IDs	Training courses	Posters, leaflets, DVDs, etc	High visibility policing	Enforcement through test purchasing
Very effective	85%	61%	53%	63%	53%	64%	68%
Fairly effective	13%	34%	42%	30%	40%	27%	21%
Not very effective	2%	3%	2%	1%	7%	4%	4%
Not at all effective	-	1%	-	1%	-	1%	3%
Don't know	-	1%	3%	4%	-	3%	4%
Base (those aware) :	99	74	62	67	86	70	100

Over four-fifths believe that guidance on alcohol advertising, appearances before the licensing committee for a review of premises' licence and confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places have been effective.

How effective would you say [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?						
	Guidance on alcohol advertising	Appearance before licensing committee	Confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places	More family friendly licensed premises	Best Bar None Awards	Informing coach parties on stag & hen parties
Very effective	40%	56%	51%	26%	33%	12%
Fairly effective	44%	26%	30%	52%	27%	37%
Not very effective	7%	6%	11%	-	-	4%
Not at all effective	2%	-	3%	13%	7%	22%
Don't know	7%	13%	5%	10%	33%	25%
Base (those aware) :	55	54	73	31	15	49

Just under half of licensees feel that the police informing coach passengers entering Blackpool for stag and hen parties about the dangers of excess drinking has been effective, though 26% believe such actions are not effective because the mentality of the majority visiting Blackpool for these occasions is to drink, and suggest that many parties have consumed alcohol prior to their arrival.

Local authority and police initiatives used or participated in

Of all the initiatives running in Blackpool, the Think/Challenge campaigns have achieved the highest participation levels, reflecting the high regard licensees have for these and their effectiveness; 92% of licensees are participating in one of these campaigns.

Posters and other information materials are also popular. CCTV schemes have received greatest participation from on-sales premises; 83% of licensees report having participated in them compared to 48% of off-sales licensees.

Which of the following local authority and police initiatives and tools have you used or participated in?	
Think 21/25 - Challenge 21/25	92%
Posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials	78%
CCTV schemes (plus radio link, Pubwatch in on-sales premises)	61%
Support with the identification of fake IDs	51%
Training courses	46%
Guidance on alcohol advertising in licensed premises	41%
Best Bar None Awards*	26%

* Asked to on-sale premises only; sample size 42

Base: 103

Less than half of licensees are attending local authority run training courses that focus on combating the sale of alcohol to underage persons, and there is also scope to increase usage of the guidance on the advertising of alcohol and participation in the Best Bar None Awards.

Head office related support

For those licensees who are part of a chain or franchise, 92% receive support from their head office in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder. Typically this is training courses and information materials.

Informed of progress and successes of Blackpool initiatives and support offered

The dissemination of information on the progress and successes of the initiatives in Blackpool is high; 73% of licensees feel they are kept well informed. Similarly, 76% feel they are well supported by the local authority and the police in dealing with issues around underage sales of alcohol and crime and disorder.

How well informed to you feel about the progress and successes of the initiatives in Blackpool?				
How well do you feel the police and local authority support you in dealing with issues around underage sales of alcohol and crime and disorder?				
Very well informed	35%		Very well supported	41%
Fairly well informed	38%		Fairly well supported	35%
Neither	9%		Neither	10%
Fairly ill-informed	7%		Fairly poorly supported	5%
Very ill-informed	10%		Very poorly supported	9%
Don't know	2%		Don't know/Can't say	1%

Base: 103

Base: 103

Licensees' views are polarised when considering how the police and local authority can better support licensees. Almost half suggest that the local enforcement authorities are already doing a good job and that it would be difficult for them to do more while the remainder suggest additional police patrols, greater visibility in the local area, dispersal of youths, responding

quicker to assistance requests and working more effectively with businesses by improving communication, providing better advice and moving from 'trying to catch them out' to working in collaboration.

How could the police and local authority support you better?	
Authorities already doing good job	45%
Additional policing (visibility, more patrols, effectiveness)	42%
Work more effectively with business / provide support	13%
Other	4%

Base: 98

Considering the additional actions that the authorities could be taking to tackle issues around underage access to alcohol and crime and disorder in the community, roughly half of licensees again suggest that additional high visibility policing is required.

What else could the police and local authority be doing to tackle issues around underage access to alcohol and crime and disorder in the community?	
Police visibility/increase effectiveness	47%
Doing well/nothing more they can do	25%
Speak to children/schools/work with youngsters	22%
Deal with offending licensees (off-sales)	13%
Look at proxy sales	10%
Speak to parents/wider society	8%
Other	9%

Base: 101

A quarter of licensees feel the authorities are already doing all they can though 22% feel that there should be better education and more work done with children and young people to help tackle these issues.

Initiatives that can assist businesses in the future

Licensees are receptive to a range of initiatives that, going forward, could assist them in avoiding sales of alcohol to those under the age of 18. Around seven in ten, for example, feel that having the contact telephone number of enforcement officers who can attend premises when an underage purchase is attempted, guidance on how to spot fake IDs and additional promotional materials for customers could all assist in future.

Which of the following could help your business avoid selling alcohol in the future to persons under the age of 18?	
Having a contact telephone number of enforcement officers	74%
Guidance on how to identify fake IDs	72%
More promotional material informing customers about underage sales	69%
Enforcement officers in premises to help staff when young people try to buy	61%
Better understanding of legislation	51%
Guidance on refusing sales to young people	46%
Don't know	4%
None of these	5%

Base: 102

Few could comment on the measures taken by their local enforcement authorities to combat alcohol proxy sales. Remaining aware and vigilant towards proxy sales and challenging those who are believed to be attempting to purchase alcohol for those under 18 are the most common actions taken by licensees.

What are you or your local enforcement authorities doing to prevent adults buying alcohol for young people?	
Remaining vigilant	61%
Challenging/refusing	40%
Information and training, e.g. posters (staff and customers)	18%
Policing	16%
Barring offenders	10%
Practical measures taken by premises	9%
Other	4%

Base: 93

Test purchasing and action taken on those found selling alcohol to under 18's

36% of licensed premises have been found to have sold alcohol to persons under the age of 18 in the last one to two years. The most common action taken against the licensee or member of staff found to have sold alcohol to under 18's was a fixed penalty notice or a formal caution.

Sold to <18's in last 2 years	%
Yes	36%
No	61%
Don't know	3%

Base: 103

Which of the following actions were taken against your business or staff when found to have sold alcohol to a person under the age of 18?

Fixed penalty notice	46%
Formal caution	41%
Court appearance	32%
Licensing review	11%
No action taken	11%
Informal caution	8%
Don't know/Can't say	3%

If your business were found to have sold alcohol to a person under the age of 18 again, which of the following actions do you think would most likely be taken against your business or staff?

Court appearance	43%
Licensing review	43%
Fixed penalty notice	30%
Formal caution	19%
Informal caution	5%
No action taken	-
Don't know/Can't say	8%

Base: 37

If found to be selling alcohol to under 18's again in the future, over two-fifths believe they would face a court appearance, and the same proportion say a licensing review.

30% feel they would receive a fixed penalty notice and 19% a formal caution. In both instances several licensees also mentioned the offending member of staff would lose/or lost their job.

Action(s) that would be taken if found to be selling alcohol to under 18's

Amongst those who claim not to have been found selling alcohol to under 18's in the last two years, almost two-thirds believe they (or their staff) would face a fixed penalty notice if they were found to be doing so.

What do you think would happen to your business if you were found to sell alcohol to a person under the age of 18?²⁶

Fixed penalty notice	65%
Court appearance	42%
Licensing review	40%
Formal caution	18%
Informal caution	6%
Asked to attend an Age Related Products training course	6%
No action taken	2%
Don't know	6%

Base: 65

²⁶ Spontaneous answers

Licensees also mentioned that the reputation of their premises would be harmed if they were found to sell alcohol to young people and the likelihood of the staff member losing their job.

When asked to select the ONE action from a given a list of possible actions that might be taken against them (if found to be selling alcohol to those under the age of 18), 38% of licensees feel they would receive a fixed penalty notice and 30% suggest they would receive a formal caution.

Which ONE of the following do you think would be most likely to happen to your business if you were found to sell alcohol to a person under the age of 18?	
Fixed penalty notice	38%
Formal caution	30%
Court appearance	12%
Licensing review	9%
Informal caution	6%
Asked to attend an Age Related Products training course	3%
No action taken	2%

Base: 66

Views on Age Restricted Products training courses

It was explained to licensees that some local authorities offer attendance at an Age Restricted Products training course to those found to have sold alcohol to under 18's as an alternative to having formal action taken against them. The charge for the course would be similar to the cost of a fixed penalty notice.

When asked their views, 91% of licensees feel this approach could be effective locally in discouraging businesses from selling alcohol to persons under the age of 18.

Measures in premises

96% of licensees have CCTV on their premises, 87% use a sales refusal book and 70% have till prompts to help them combat the sale of alcohol to those under 18 and alcohol-related crime and disorder. Just 2% claim to have none of these measures in operation on their premises.

Summary evaluation for Blackpool

Blackpool has over 2000 licensed premises and the multi-agency partnership within Blackpool has clearly taken a hard line, particularly with off-licence premises, over the sale of alcohol to those under the age of 18. The Local Authority reports that, as a result of its 'zero tolerance' approach, Operation Ashamed has reduced sales of alcohol to young people from an average 29% in 2007 to 23% in 2008, though there is considerable volatility in the monthly compliance statistics both for on-sales and off-sales premises.

The licensee survey shows that 36% of premises had sold alcohol to those under the age of 18 in the last two years, showing a degree of consistency with the reported local authority data.

Licensees are aware of the problems of underage persons attempting to buy alcohol that prompted the partnership to take action. Almost all of those who participated in the survey (97%) are aware that enforcement through test purchasing is used to measure levels of compliance. Similarly, the vast majority see this as an effective method of ensuring compliance.

With between 320 and 550 attempted test purchases annually, Blackpool's test purchasing approach is claimed to be achieving its aim of reducing sales of alcohol to under 18's; the level of awareness of the test purchasing regime by licensees is high. However, what is interesting is that, whilst awareness of test purchasing and the need for compliance are high, awareness of the actions that will be taken for non-compliance is low.

There is still an expectation, particularly amongst those who previously have not been found to have sold alcohol to those under the age of 18 by the enforcement authorities, that fixed penalty fines or formal cautions are the normal course of action. It would appear that the message that more punitive action will be taken by the enforcement authorities for non-compliance has not fully filtered through to licensees in Blackpool.

However, from comments received through the survey it is known that at least five members of staff of the thirty six premises found to have sold alcohol to underage young people lost their jobs. This is clearly a deterrent used by business owners and managers to encourage compliance.

The survey results also show that a relatively high proportion, roughly three-quarters of those surveyed, feel they are being kept up-to-date on the progress and successes of the initiatives being undertaken in Blackpool and that the local authority and police are supporting them in dealing with issues around underage sales of alcohol and crime and disorder. In other words, not only is the test purchasing regime seen as an acceptable method of improving compliance, the local enforcement agencies are seen as positively supporting licensees to ensure compliance.

The general increase in compliance levels however cannot be solely attributed to the test purchasing regime as there is high awareness and participation of other initiatives being undertaken in Blackpool. In particular there are high levels of implementation in the Think 21 and Challenge 21 campaigns (and the Think 25/Challenge 25 alternatives) and the use of posters, leaflets, DVDs and other information, such as till prompts. 85% of licensees believe the Think/Challenge campaigns are *very effective* in helping them deal with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder.

That said, given that many of these other measures have been available and in use for some time, the results from the test purchasing exercises clearly indicate that this one initiative has helped drive improvements in compliance in off-sales premises.

With awareness of the test purchasing regime being so high, further dissemination of the penalties for non-compliance (prosecution for a first offence, followed by a licence review for subsequent breaches) may not be necessary - it appears that the sustained focus on test purchasing, with the publicity and media coverage that has followed it, has already proved enough to increase levels of compliance. Indeed the counter view may be that, by spelling out exactly what will happen, the enforcement agencies may alienate licensees, who are often looking for partnership working. What is clear is that the initiatives need to remain top of mind amongst licensees for the benefits to remain.

Licensing Evaluation Study of Lancashire

Lancashire's multi-agency approach to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder

Project overview

Lancashire County Council has taken a multi-agency approach to young people and their understanding and interaction with alcohol and tobacco. A specialist team has developed excellent working relationships with Education – School and Communities Partnership Team, the Licensing Community, Lancashire Drug and Alcohol Team, Primary Care Trusts and Enforcement Agencies. As a two tier authority, strong links have also been formed with district councils, of which there are 12 in Lancashire, to aid in the delivery of the project. They are considered pivotal partners.

The forging of close working relationships with partner organisations that have alcohol and tobacco as an agenda item has been a key benefit of this initiative. It has assisted in evidencing the cross cutting themes that underage access to alcohol has on local communities and has helped to drive partner performance to address this. It has also clarified that a holistic approach needs to be taken with a coordinated series of measures in order to make a difference.

In 2004 Lancashire County Council established a three year initiative – Alcohol: Protecting Children and Improving Communities (the Project). Managed by a steering group of partner agencies, their aim was to adopt a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to tackling young people's alcohol misuse and its impact on communities. The key strands of the Project were:

- To raise awareness of the effects of alcohol on the life chances of young people and its impact on communities.
- The development of a marketing framework and strategies involving partner agencies and young people.
- To adopt a holistic approach to developing and commissioning information and educational materials in order to support services, many of which did not have the resources or knowledge for such undertakings at the time.
- To act as a conduit between partner organisations to maximise value for money and effective working.

It is in this last area of working with the County Council's Trading Standards Service (TSS), that the greatest impact in activity has been seen in the past year. Over this time an excellent track record and national recognition for its age restricted products has been achieved.

The TSS has been fundamental in influencing and driving partner performance, primarily through being the lead service responsible for Local Area Agreement (LAA) stretch targets relating to the availability of alcohol and tobacco. This has led to increased joint working between the TSS and the Project (now known as The Alliance), with all parties acknowledging that LAA targets, young people's attitudes and the community's attitudes to alcohol and tobacco use can not be influenced by enforcement action alone, and agreeing that there is a need for a co-ordinated programme that can impact upon the social aspects of age restricted products.

In response, The Alliance has established a number of 'umbrella campaigns' targeting a diverse audience, encompassing young people, parents, businesses and agencies. They

highlight the impacts of alcohol and tobacco on communities and of the effects of excessive consumption on health and life chances for young people. These include:

Education: Resource materials for teachers; a website for primary schools; an alcohol awareness teaching package for secondary schools; a pupils' alcohol conference; and a campaign aimed at raising awareness amongst parents.

Media: A high profile radio/media campaign.

Consultation: Extensive consultation with 9 to 13 year olds.

Enforcement: The Local Area Agreement requires the Trading Standards Service to increase retailer compliance levels for underage sales. By undertaking over 900 alcohol/ tobacco test purchases annually, retailer compliance has increased year on year and now represents one of the best levels of compliance in the country. This step change improvement has only been achieved by enforcement complemented with partnership working and a campaign against proxy sales.

Business support: Training seminars; an interactive DVD training package; an option for traders caught selling to the under-aged to attend a training course rather than receive a fixed penalty or be taken to court; and advice and information when the age limit increased to 18 for tobacco sales.

National and local objectives

Overall crime figures for Lancashire are low, but in some neighbourhoods and for particular communities there are very high levels of some types of crime. Where community safety is a problem, it has a very negative impact on the lives of residents, impinging on the health and wellbeing of those immediately affected as well as neighbouring towns and villages. Even where crime levels are not high, the fear of crime and feeling of safety is still a major issue and affects behaviour, confidence and quality of life. Despite the relative safety of Lancashire, surveys show that concerns about safety and perception of crime in many areas are disproportionate compared to the reality.

Previously the focus of Lancashire's Local Area Agreement has been on crime reduction and in particular burglary, robbery and theft of and from vehicles. However in recent years this has been extended, as communities have expressed their concerns about anti-social behaviour including criminal damage. The inclusion of National Indicators **NI 16 – Serious Acquisitive Crime Rate**, **NI 20 – Assault with injury crime rate**, and **NI 30 – Re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders** were obvious choices for inclusion in the 2008-2011 LAA²⁷.

Local strategies and plans

Alcohol has been identified as a priority theme for the LAA through its Refresh Local Targets²⁸ and through the Healthier Communities and Older People (HCOP) themes. Innovative work involving a wide range of partners is taking place and this is impacting on at least seven of the targets as well as supporting the development of District alcohol harm reduction strategies. This approach is viewed as a model of good practice nationally and covers both alcohol and tobacco use. Results indicate that the local authority has been particularly successful in exceeding its baseline targets for both underage alcohol and tobacco consumption, and believes that more is still possible.

²⁷ Lancashire LAA
<http://www.lancashirepartnership.co.uk/content.asp?siteid=3813&pageid=18181&e=e#anchor81643>

²⁸ Lancashire LAA and LAA Refresh:
<http://www.lancashirepartnership.co.uk/content.asp?siteid=3813&pageid=18181&e=e>

Objectives of The Alliance 2007- 08 Project

The Alliance seeks to add value to partner agency activities through:

- The development of a co-ordinated umbrella campaign for Lancashire.
- Identifying and plugging gaps in the provision of information to support awareness around alcohol and tobacco issues.
- Supporting the targeting and impact of enforcement in response to local community concerns and intelligence.
- Identifying and promoting good practice.

It also seeks to strengthen protective factors in the community that aim to reduce the incidence of youth crime and anti-social behaviour in the future. These protective factors are:

- **Social Bonding:** that is strengthening children's bonds with family members, friends, teachers, etc. The Alliance has promoted parental teaching and peer influence and roles in addressing children's attitudes towards alcohol.
- **Healthy Standards:** parents, teachers and others who lead by example, holding clearly-stated expectations for children's behaviour. A central theme of the initiative is to promote healthier lifestyles through sensible attitudes to alcohol and tobacco.
- **Opportunities for involvement:** affording children the opportunity to feel involved and valued in their families, schools and communities. An Alliance principle is that young people are involved in identifying, promoting and developing messages and materials.
- **Social and learning skills:** that is equipping children with the social, reasoning and practical skills needed later in life. The Alliance focuses upon the social impacts of alcohol and tobacco and the issues of resisting peer pressure.

The Alliance Project is managed by a Steering Group consisting of Education, Youth Offending Team, Police, Trading Standards, Drug Alcohol Action Team, Policy Unit, Social Services and voluntary agencies. A principle of the project is to work with young people and the community through engaging them in consultation and involving them in the development of educational and awareness raising resources.

Background to the state of health in Lancashire and initiatives developed to address alcohol misuse

The Association of Public Health Observatories profiles demonstrate the health of local populations. The table below provides a summary of the picture in Lancashire and gives a snapshot of health problems and how they compare to the national average.

Approximately half of Lancashire districts are worse than the national average for alcohol and tobacco related issues²⁹.

²⁹

Source: <http://www.localgov.co.uk/view/docs/awards2008/publicprotection/finalists/Lancs.pdf>

Domain		Burnley	Chorley	Fylde	Hyndburn	Lancaster	Pendle	Preston	Ribble Valley	Rossendale	South Ribble	West Lancs	Wyre
The way we live	Adults who smoke												
	Binge drinking adults												
	Healthy eating adults												
	Physically active adults												
	Obese adults												
How long we live and what we die of	Life expectancy - male												
	Life expectancy - female												
	Deaths from smoking												
	Early deaths**												
	Early deaths: cancer												
	Infant deaths												
	Road injuries and deaths												
Health and ill health in our community	Feeling 'in poor health'												
	Mental health												
	Hospital stays - alcohol												
	Drug misuse												
	People with diabetes												
	Children's tooth decay												
	Older people: hip fracture												

KEY	
Significantly worse than national average	
Around the national average	
At or above national average	
* Under 18	
** Heart disease and stroke	
*** Sexually transmitted infections	

In 2004 Lancashire County Council established a three year initiative – Alcohol: Protecting Children and Improving Communities, managed by a steering group of partner agencies. Its aim was to take a coordinated multi-agency approach to tackling young people’s alcohol misuse and its impact on communities. Key strands were:

- To raise awareness of the effects of alcohol on the life chances of young people and its impact on communities.
- The development of a marketing framework and strategies involving partner agencies and young people.
- To adopt an holistic approach to developing and commissioning information and educational materials in order to support services, many of which did not have the resources or knowledge for such undertakings at that time.
- To act as a conduit between partner organisations to maximise value for money and effective working.

To inform this initiative and provide an up-to-date countywide snapshot of the views and experiences of alcohol use in the context of young peoples’ lifestyles, Lancashire County Council, along with Lancashire Children’s Fund, commissioned a research study³⁰. Findings from this, which surveyed around 800 young people aged 9 to 13, showed them starting to experiment with alcohol around the age of 10 years. It also highlighted the importance of parents as role models for their children, placing an emphasis upon parents to encourage sensible drinking messages.

³⁰ Young Peoples Alcohol Questionnaire Data, February 2005
http://www.saferlancashire.co.uk/initiatives/alcohol/alcohol_consultation_report.doc

In 2005 the Trading Standards North West Regional Group commissioned a research study³¹, its objectives being to identify how and where young people obtain alcohol in order to effectively plan intelligence led campaigns. This study gathered the views and experiences of just under 13,000 young people aged 14 to 17. It found that half of teenagers in the North West drink alcohol at least once a week, and almost three-quarters drink more than once a month. Two-thirds drink at home with their family or when their parents are in. Those who drink with their family and drink on special occasions tend to drink less often than those who drink on the streets or in parks³².

During 2007 the Alcohol: Protecting Children and Improving Communities Project strands were extended. Using the knowledge gained thus far, the Project focused on developing the links between Education (in its widest sense), the Licensing Community, Lancashire Drug and Alcohol Team, Primary Care Trusts and Enforcement Agencies.

The Alliance has been working with the County Council's Trading Standards Service (TSS), which has an excellent track record and has received national recognition for its work with age restricted products. As the lead Service responsible for Local Area Agreement (LAA) stretch targets relating to the availability of alcohol and tobacco, TSS has been fundamental in influencing and driving partner performance and has had the greatest impact upon activity in 2007.

Through increased joint working between the TSS and The Alliance, it was acknowledged that neither LAA targets nor the attitudes of young people or the community to alcohol and tobacco use would be influenced by enforcement action alone. Therefore, The Alliance devised a programme to impact upon the social aspects of age restricted products, extending also into other substance abuse, e.g. tobacco.

Delivery of the project

The Alliance has established a number of 'umbrella campaigns' targeting a diverse audience of young people, parents, businesses and agencies. These campaigns highlight the impacts of alcohol and tobacco on communities and of the effects of excessive consumption on health and life chances for young people. During 2007/08 the following initiatives have been launched or refreshed by The Alliance, the aim being to break the link between alcohol and anti-social behaviour and reduce the availability of alcohol and tobacco to children, thereby ensuring higher achievement at school and improving health.

a) Education

In partnership with the Schools and Communities Partnership Team the following materials have been produced to assist teaching/ learning of alcohol issues within Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programmes at Key Stages, and the development of alcohol issues within the Healthy Schools Programme.

Following consultation with young people an innovative web-based educational resource for primary schools has been developed called **Lookout Alcohol**. The website was identified by the Schools Effectiveness Service as being of benefit to over 26,594 pupils in Years 5 & 6 (Key Stage 2, aged 7-11).

The website supports teachers by introducing alcohol education through a cross-curricular approach. There is also a parents section providing advice and information around alcohol issues. The website has been designed by young people to provide alcohol education in a fun

³¹ TSNW Alcohol Survey of Young People June 2005
http://www.saferlancashire.co.uk/initiatives/alcohol/TSNW_Survey.ppt

³² Further details on these consultations and others can be found on Alcohol Project website
<http://www.saferlancashire.co.uk/initiatives/alcohol/>

and interactive way and many pupils have consequently used this site in their leisure time. The website has been recognised nationally for its innovative approach to primary school alcohol education.

A parallel “Lookout Tobacco” website funded by the TSS is currently being constructed.

The Alliance and its partners developed an alcohol awareness teaching package, **Carrying the Can**, aimed at Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11). This CD ROM resource highlights the links between young people’s drinking and anti-social and sexual behaviour. It encourages young people to think about the personal and social implications of alcohol misuse. The resource is also used by Youth Offending Teams and GRIP (Group Intervention Panel), a multi-agency early intervention initiative that works with children and young people believed to be at risk of becoming involved in crime or anti-social behaviour.

A series of **Pupil Alcohol Conferences** addressing a range of risk taking behaviours are being delivered, aimed at Year 9 and 10 pupils. Interactive workshops cover issues such as:

- Sexual behaviour including sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies.
- Anti-social behaviour and crime.
- Emergency situations and where to get help.
- Personal safety.
- The law controlling the sale and purchase of alcohol and tobacco.
- Promotion of sensible drinking messages.
- Promotion of diversionary activities.

A theatre group is used as a stimulus for discussion, together with a teacher’s workshop on alcohol education. The intention is to raise young people’s awareness of sensible drinking, encourage them to recognise the wide range and impact of risk taking behaviours associated with alcohol, and to provide information on the support available for those concerned about drinking habits.

b) Engaging with parents

The “**Clear Campaign**” - “Children Learn by Example and Adult Responsibility” has been developed to engage with parents to raise awareness about alcohol issues and sensible drinking and talking to children about alcohol issues. 50,000 leaflets and posters have been disseminated across the county encouraging parents to discuss alcohol issues with their children and focussing on their responsibilities as good role models.

A "Clear" booklet has been developed for parents to encourage them to be aware of where their children are, their activities and the money they have to spend on alcohol etc. and incorporating aspects of the CAPS campaign (see below). Through a series of initiatives 50,000 copies have been distributed through schools and retail premises.

Further work is underway to develop a parenting toolkit. Workshops are planned to deliver the toolkits through parenting and community groups linked with school education sessions.

c) Supporting partners

The Alliance has worked with the Youth and Community Team to develop a leaflet/poster “**Alcohol, the Law & Young People campaign**” which in a fun way communicates alcohol law to young people. 40,000 leaflets have been distributed to vulnerable young people.

A high profile alcohol awareness ‘social action’ radio campaign has been broadcast, delivered in partnership with key agencies, retailers and young people.

Over 2,000 young people in Lancashire have been consulted about alcohol. The findings were used to provide a countywide snapshot of the views and experiences of alcohol use within their lifestyles (9-13) and to inform alcohol awareness marketing strategies.

d) Working with business

Through **training seminars**, The Alliance has focused on the development of effective processes for the reporting of and response to alcohol-related juvenile nuisance in local communities. Numerous trade seminars have been jointly hosted with Lancashire Constabulary including ‘Sharing Best Practice on Age Restricted Products’ and Age Check. Since 2005 approximately 16 training sessions have taken place (about one per quarter) with Lancashire Constabulary and just over 500 businesses have attended.

Age Check is an interactive DVD training package for retailers, produced by Trading Standards and the private sector. It informs retailers on the law, prevention methods and wider social messages regarding age restricted products. The DVD, incorporating a 30-minute film which can be broadcast in five languages, has been distributed free to all businesses in Lancashire selling age restricted products (some 7000 plus units). This resource has been recognised by the Trading Standards Institute as an example of good practice; a revised version has been produced together with a dedicated website launched in 2007, and is available nationally.

The Local Area Agreement requires the Trading Standards Service to increase retailer compliance levels for underage sales. By undertaking over 900 alcohol and tobacco **test purchases** annually, retailer compliance has been increased year on year and now represents the best level of compliance in the country. The percentage of underage alcohol sales has more than halved between 2005 and 2008. This step change improvement has only been achieved by enforcement complemented with partnership working.

The **Offenders Age Restricted Products training course** has been developed for traders who have failed an age restricted test purchase. It is reported to be the first course of its kind in the country developed to increase awareness and improve trader compliance in relation to age restricted sales following a failed test purchase, replacing the traditional Court / Caution sanctions of punishment³³.

The first part of the course focuses on the bigger picture and the reasons for restrictions on age related products, the social impact of such products and the effects of alcohol and tobacco on the young person as an individual and also the wider community. The second part is based around the law and the interactive resource Age Check, focusing on best practice for businesses and staff to help prevent future illegal sales of age restricted products.

This course is offered to those who have failed a test purchase as an alternative to prosecution. Attendees are charged a fee similar to a fixed penalty notice. The course is also open to retailers on a voluntary basis as a training opportunity. Two pilot courses were delivered in 2007, one in East Lancashire and the other in Preston, covering the west of the County.

³³ Attendance figures are given in Case Study Evaluations Appendices - Appendix A1

The courses last half a day and sessions are led by a Police Officer (alcohol-related issues), Health Worker (tobacco issues) and Lancashire Alcohol Project (effects of alcohol on children). The general law and Age Check session is led by Trading Standards.

International research has shown that this approach of education and enforcement is the most effective. Although feedback from delegates has been positive and the initiative is felt to be a proportionate response to instances of simple mistakes by retailers together with reducing the burden on businesses, there have been calls for more interaction with the speakers rather than being “spoken at”. The course is therefore being developed to address this feedback, starting with an Age Check quiz.

This initiative has been forwarded to the Attorney General’s office by the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) as good practice for Conditional Cautioning.

Two cases studies providing examples of the work undertaken with businesses are given in Case Study Evaluation Appendices - Appendix B3.

Campaign Against Alcohol Proxy Sales (CAPS)

The 2007 Trading Standards North West survey shows that 38% of Lancashire teenagers claim to binge drink, much of which is consumed outside the home. Since a similar survey in 2005, 4% less young people now claim to buy alcohol themselves, which bears out TSS figures showing retailer compliance has increased. Unfortunately, however, this void has been filled by young people obtaining alcohol through alternative methods such as older siblings, friends, strangers and parents.

The Alliance has responded by launching a campaign specifically targeting the issue of alcohol proxy sales³⁴, with the ultimate aim of making the supplying of alcohol to young people socially unacceptable; this is obviously a long term strategy. The specific aims of the campaign are:

- Reduce indirect sales through raising legal, social and health aspects of irresponsibly supplying alcohol to young people.
- Engage with young people through communication methods that are particularly relevant to them: radio and an interactive micro-website.
- Train retailers to refuse ‘proxy sales’.
- Encourage the public to report suspected sales to Crimestoppers.

A draft joint enforcement protocol has been drawn up with the police and the Trading Standards Service to undertake enforcement activity.

Evaluation of CAPS

A small pre- and post-campaign market research study was commissioned to measure the recall of CAPS, whether it affected the way people think about under-age drinking and proxy sales and its perceived usefulness. The study involving interviewing some 100 men and women aged between 13 and 30 in Preston town centre.

Due primarily to the relatively small sample size, few of the differences in pre- and post-campaign findings are statistically significant. Nevertheless, some learning was gained from the exercise:

- The majority of those questioned were concerned about underage drinking issues.

³⁴ ‘Proxy purchasing’ is where a person over the age of 18 purchases alcohol for young people.

- Around 60% of under-18's admitted to having bought alcohol, the majority from local shops and off-licences.
- Around 50% were aware of what a proxy sale/purchase was after the campaign compared to 20% before it.
- Around 40% of young people said they had asked someone to buy alcohol for them after the campaign compared to 75% before it. Most asked older siblings or friends.
- 35% to 50% of over 18's had bought alcohol for someone under age.
- 60% claimed to be aware of the Campaign Against Alcohol Proxy Sales, principally having seen the posters in local shops or supermarkets or heard the adverts on the radio.
- Having learnt that it is illegal to buy alcohol on someone's behalf or ask someone to buy it, almost 90% said they would change their behaviour after the campaign compared to 65% before it.

An evaluation of an Age Check Retailer Training Event, designed to provide support and guidance to local retailers when dealing with the general issue of underage sales and to raise awareness around the issues of proxy sales, gave very positive feedback. Although the number of responses was small (29 retailers participated in the evaluation), the vast majority rated the proxy sales awareness materials as good or excellent and suitable for the target audience. Although 40% were not displaying the materials prior to the event, all said they would do so following it.

Verbal feedback at the event was also extremely positive. Many of the retailers were genuinely concerned about the issues of underage drinking and were keen to make staff aware of proxy sales issues. One national store in particular took extra materials to display in-store and invited The Alliance to a follow up meeting with senior management to discuss further training and support issues. In terms of other activities, some stores were also taking steps to withdraw from their windows those alcohol promotions most likely to attract a younger audience while others were moving popular drinks with young people such as cider and alcopops from general display and placing them behind counters.

A short evaluation questionnaire was also distributed amongst Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in the Preston area. Again the sample was small (8), though the results were interesting. All but one had noticed CAPS materials in retailer premises although there had been no increase in retailers contacting them for advice and support and there was no obvious increase in the reporting of proxy sales incidents. Most felt that there had been a reduction in young people hanging around the outside of premises in their area.

Thinking about how proxy sales could best be enforced, the PCSOs suggested: "Bring in a fixed penalty notice for youths who obtain alcohol/tobacco via proxy sale"; "Encourage shop workers to report any unusual sales of alcohol and times that this is happening"; "Educate all staff – training courses, etc (to be aware of consequences)"; "Test purchasing/advertisement". They also commented that "Shops are already good at reporting suspect proxy sales"; "Off-licence owners are becoming more vigilant in the area about this (proxy sales) but this needs to be encouraged with the shop assistants to monitor and report."

In terms of suggesting how to take the Proxy Sales Campaign forward, they said: "Make it more commercialised"; "Increase patrols/visits to premises"; "Advertise – nationally"; "Just to keep reassuring the local communities and the off-licence owners that we are constantly monitoring and working on discouraging this from happening"; "There is no consequence for the young person who is trying to buy/or harassing customers to buy alcohol. Although they could be classed as victims they are offenders as well who appear to get away with it and

often are repeat offenders”; “The young person could possibly be sent (voluntary) on an alcohol awareness course – showing what alcohol does to a person, especially large amounts on a Friday/Sat evening”; “There could be some involvement with family to support parents with young people who are continued drinkers, etc. Involve other agencies that can provide a support network”.

The campaign has raised awareness within the community, encouraging members of the public to take responsibility around reporting issues of proxy sales. Prompted by the campaign, one concerned parent provided Trading Standards and the Police with valuable information regarding young people gaining access to alcohol through proxy purchases and resulting in several incidents involving young girls either ending up in hospital or making themselves particularly vulnerable to assault after drinking bottles of vodka purchased for them by an adult stranger.

Cost of the project

In July 2005 the Alcohol Project was funded primarily by Lancashire Children’s Fund and underwritten by the County Council’s Crime and Disorder budget. Funding covered the lifetime of the project up to 31st March 2006. In addition to the project’s allocated marketing budget of £64,000 (spent over the project’s 3 year life cycle) the project team secured a total of £11,000 of funding from Lancashire Drug Action Team and contributed to the successful bid for £50,000, which was part of the Home Office’s Blueprint Initiative³⁵.

£6000 was received through Neighbourhood Renewal Funding in 2005/06 to reduce sales of alcohol to underage young people and £2000 in 2006/07 for in-depth consultation with young females aged 11 to 18 on alcohol awareness.

The Alcohol Project, along with partner organisations, also secured in excess of £70,000 in 2005/06 in order to raise awareness and reduce young people’s access to alcohol.

Funding for test purchasing within the Tackling Underage Sales of Alcohol Campaign (TUSAC) was received from the Home Office.

Funding streams are constantly being sought by Lancashire County Council and partner organisations in order to continue and develop the work of The Alliance. This includes a bid for £30,000 to the Home Office for each Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership area. Parallel bids are made for work in connection with tobacco enforcement.

Short-term funding for the Young Persons Alcohol Project has resulted in uncertainty in long-term planning. Also the Project has experienced difficulty in establishing measurable outcomes.

Learning and things that might have been improved or done differently

A great deal of effort and resource has been expended in ensuring the year on year survival of the Alcohol Project. Had the project been mainstreamed from the outset and thus long-term funding secured, this effort could have been directed more effectively in delivering the outcomes of the project.

The increase in retail compliance levels has displaced the issue to a certain extent to proxy sales. Better planning and foresight would have resulted in CAPS being created and developed from the outset.

It is essential from the outset to have full partner engagement with a shared agenda, including the Police, Primary Care Trusts and District Councils. In Lancashire most partners have

³⁵ Alcohol Project Sustainability Action Plan July 2005:
http://www.saferlancashire.co.uk/initiatives/alcohol/business_plan.pdf

successfully worked together although with so many different bodies involved it has not been easy meeting everyone's expectations.

It is important to have full engagement with young people, schools and the education sector. Also, parents have been pivotal in the success of the programme, therefore engagement with them at the earliest opportunity is necessary.

Intelligence leads to better and more robust identification of hotspot areas for multi-agency interventions. Establishing measureable outcomes is also important though the Project experienced difficulties in this area.

The project is seen as a success locally and expectations have been raised. Unfortunately these have not been matched by funding or staff resources from the centre. At present, workload is outstripping the capacity of the team to deliver and there is a need to re-evaluate staffing levels in view of the increased demand.

In terms of funding and resources, funding opportunities have had to be sought. There is money available but certain sharpness is required to find it and an ability to "speak the language" is necessary to obtain it! Traditionally, services like Trading Standards have not had to make funding bids, and therefore there has been a learning curve for Lancashire and required additional resource. However, when projects are successful and delivered on time and within budget, further opportunities can arise.

The next phase

The Alcohol Project through partnership working has been able to establish a campaign that has been rolled out across Lancashire. The campaign has focused on raising general awareness of the legal consequences of alcohol proxy sales. The range of media that has been employed has assisted in increasing awareness amongst the target audiences and the campaign has received positive comments. Feedback received provides evidence that Lancashire has begun to address the aims and outcomes of the initial campaign.

However, it is evident that further work is needed in order to satisfactorily achieve all of the aims. To effect a change in attitude and consequently the behaviour of the target groups, a long-term strategy is needed. Further activity needs to be undertaken with parents, older adults and young people through a variety of different methods and from both an enforcement and education approach. Increased enforcement activity and publicity around proxy sales issues needs to be carried out.

The next phase of the campaign is moving the focus away from the legal consequences and concentrating on parental and society's responsibilities around the issues of irresponsibly supplying alcohol to young people. It will highlight the health and social consequences for young people - violence, anti-social behaviour, accidents, increased risk of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, physical and mental health problems, poor health outcomes, and poor school performance.

Licensee survey for Lancashire

Background to the business survey

A short telephone survey was undertaken amongst licensees³⁶ in the Lancashire area during February 2009. The purpose was to establish the extent of their awareness of the tools and initiatives being implemented by their local enforcement authorities to prevent underage sales of alcohol and alcohol-related crime and disorder, their effectiveness, usage and participation in the initiatives and those that might help them avoid sales to persons under the age of 18 in the future. It also explored issues around enforcement, whether they had been found to sell to young people, and actions that might be taken against them if they were to offend in the future.

In total 101 licensed premises were interviewed; 33 selling alcohol for consumption on premises, 60 selling alcohol for consumption off premises and 8 selling for consumption both on and off premises. 37 businesses are independents whilst 64 are part of a chain or franchise.

Existence of problems in the area

The vast majority of licensees could recall problems in the Lancashire area that led the local authority and police to develop initiatives to address them. It is young people attempting to purchase alcohol that is mentioned most commonly.

Thinking back over the past two to three years, which of the following problems existed in your local area resulting in your local authority and Lancashire police developing initiatives to deal with them?	
Young people trying to buy alcohol	82%
Incidence of anti-social behaviour generally amongst young people	65%
Young people congregating around alcohol licensed premises	57%
Street drinking by young people	51%
Intimidation and threats to staff	47%
Customers or members of the public being intimidated by young people	44%
Incidents of adults buying alcohol for young people	42%
Incidence of public disorder	41%
Number of complaints received around anti-social behaviour	41%
Levels of alcohol-related litter (i.e. cans, bottles)	38%
Don't know	3%
None of these	5%

Base: 99

As in Blackpool, a greater proportion of off-sales licensees recall young people congregating around premises (65%) and adults buying for young people (54%) than on-sales licensees (46% and 23% respectively).

³⁶ The sample database from which licensees were drawn was provided by the local authority with additional sample sourced from Yell.com. Where figures in tables do not sum to 100%, this is due to rounding.

Verbal abuse of staff accounts for the greatest proportion of problems experienced by businesses.

Which of the following has your business experienced?	
Verbal abuse of staff	61%
Theft of alcohol by young people	45%
Threats/intimidation of staff	39%
Threats/intimidation of customers	29%
Violence towards staff	25%
None of these	19%

Base: 96

Licensees awareness of initiatives run in Lancashire

It is the Think and Challenge campaigns that licensees have greatest awareness of. Overall 86% are aware of one of these, 79% for Think 21/Challenge 21 and 25% for Think 25/Challenge 25.

In addition, roughly three-quarters of licensees claim to be aware of the test purchasing regime in Lancashire (rising to 87% amongst off-sales licensees) and the Campaign Against Alcohol Proxy Sales.

Which of the following initiatives and tools do you think are being used by your local authority and Lancashire Police to help licensed premises address underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?	
Think 21/Challenge 21	79%
Enforcement through test purchasing, measuring compliance of licensed premises	77%
Campaign Against Alcohol Proxy Sales	73%
Posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials that inform staff	67%
High visibility policing to discourage crime and disorder	57%
Support with the identification of fake IDs	56%
Training courses, such as Age Check	54%
Best Bar None Awards*	54%
Expansion of CCTV schemes (plus radio links and Pubwatch for on-sales premises)	47%
Confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places	45%
Guidance on alcohol advertising in licensed premises	35%
Think 25/Challenge 25	25%
Appearance before local authority licensing committee for review of premises' licence	20%

* Asked to on-sales premises only; sample size 41

Base: 101

Awareness of training courses is greatest amongst off-sales licensees (65% vs. 41% for on-sales licensees). By contrast, a higher proportion of on-sales licensees know about their enforcement authorities using posters, DVDs and other materials that inform staff and CCTV schemes that help address underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder (81% and 68% respectively compared to 59% and 38% amongst off-sales licensees).

Effectiveness of initiatives

Amongst those aware of the Think 21/25 and Challenge 21/25 schemes, 94% believe that they are effective.

High visibility policing, guidance on advertising, the use of information materials, support with identifying fake IDs, appearances before the licensing committee, expansion of CCTV, test purchasing and the Campaign Against Alcohol Proxy Sales are all felt to be effective by some eight or nine out of ten licensees.

How effective would you say [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?						
	Think 21/25 - Challenge 21/25	High visibility policing	Guidance on alcohol advertising	Posters, leaflets, DVDs, etc	Support with identifying fake IDs	Appearance before licensing committee for review
Very effective	54%	41%	37%	34%	32%	50%
Fairly effective	40%	50%	54%	52%	54%	35%
Not very effective	1%	5%	6%	6%	5%	5%
Not at all effective	2%	-	-	3%	5%	5%
Don't know	2%	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%
Base (those aware) :	87	58	35	67	57	20

How effective would you say [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?						
	Expansion of CCTV scheme	Enforcement through test purchasing	Alcohol proxy sales campaign	Training courses	Confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places	Best Bar None Awards*
Very effective	43%	37%	27%	40%	33%	18%
Fairly effective	41%	45%	55%	38%	33%	18%
Not very effective	4%	6%	9%	4%	16%	5%
Not at all effective	7%	6%	1%	-	9%	9%
Don't know	4%	5%	7%	18%	9%	50%
Base (those aware) :	46	78	74	55	45	22

* Asked for on-premises sales only; sample size 41

Just 36% feel the Best Bar None Awards are effective; 50% have been unable to comment.

Local authority and police initiatives used or participated in

The Think/Challenge campaigns achieve the highest levels of participation from licensees; 79% claim to have implemented one of these.

CCTV schemes have received greatest participation from on-sales premises; 59% of licensees report having participated in them compared to 32% of off-sales licensees. By contrast, proportionally more off-sales licensees have participated in training courses, 49% compared to 29% of on-sales licensees.

76% of licensees working in independent stores have used their local authority's posters, DVDs and other materials to inform staff compared to 56% of those in chains.

Which of the following local authority and police initiatives and tools have you used or participated in?	
Think 21/25 – Challenge 21/25	79%
Posters, leaflets, DVDs & other materials that inform staff	63%
Campaign Against Alcohol Proxy Sales	62%
Support with the identification of fake IDs	51%
Training courses, such as Age Check	42%
Expansion of CCTV schemes, etc	41%
Guidance on alcohol advertising	31%
Best Bar None Awards*	24%
Appearing before licensing committee to review licence	8%
None of these	7%

* Asked of on-premises sales only; sample size 41

Base: 101

Head office related support

For licensees who are part of a chain or franchise, 83% receive support from their head office in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder. These are typically training courses and materials that inform staff.

Informed of progress and successes of local initiatives and support offered

73% of licensees feel they are kept well informed of the progress and successes of the initiatives in Lancashire and 61% feel they are well supported by their local authority and police.

How well informed do you feel about the progress and successes of the initiatives in Lancashire?			
How well do you feel the police and local authority support you in dealing with issues around underage sales of alcohol and crime and disorder?			
Very well informed	20%	Very well supported	31%
Fairly well informed	53%	Fairly well supported	30%
Neither	9%	Neither	16%
Fairly ill-informed	11%	Fairly poorly supported	8%
Very ill-informed	5%	Very poorly supported	9%
Don't know	2%	Don't know/Can't say	6%

Base: 100

Base: 100

When asked how the local authority and police could better support licensees two-fifths suggest they are already supported and that there is nothing more that can be done. However, a third call for additional high visibility police patrols and faster police response times when assistance is requested.

How could the police and local authority support you better?	
Nothing/they are doing all they can	39%
Increase police visibility/bobbies on the beat	34%
More support/information/cooperation	17%
Quicker police response time when called	13%
Other	13%

Base: 92

The local enforcement authorities' tackling of issues around underage access to alcohol and crime and disorder is felt to be already in-hand by around a quarter of licensees. Others suggest that additional police resources are required, and that a harder line should be taken against offending underage persons, adults who attempt to purchase alcohol on their behalf and the licensees who allow this to happen.

What else could the police and local authority be doing to tackle issues around underage access to alcohol and crime and disorder in the community?	
Nothing/they are doing all they can	27%
More patrolling/police presence	27%
Deal with underage offenders/proxy sales	23%
Deal with offending licensees/supermarkets	23%
More information/awareness raising	12%
Other	8%

Base: 74

Measures that can assist businesses in the future

Having the contact number of enforcement officers who can attend premises when an underage purchase is attempted is considered a potentially helpful measure in avoiding the sales of alcohol in the future, especially for those in independent stores. 83% suggest this compared to 62% of those working in chains.

Which of the following could help your business avoid selling alcohol in the future to persons under the age of 18?	
Having a contact telephone number of enforcement officers	70%
More promotional material	67%
Guidance on how to identify fake IDs	55%
Guidance on refusing sales to young people	38%
Better understanding of legislation	31%
Enforcement officers in premises to help staff when young people try to buy	23%
None of these	8%

Base: 99

For 8%, none of the listed initiatives are felt to offer any future assistance.

When asked to consider what is being done by licensees and the local enforcement authorities to prevent alcohol proxy sales, it is the education of customers (using posters and warning notices, for example) and the training of staff that is top of mind for licensees.

Challenging and refusing sales where a proxy sale is suspected and remaining ever vigilant are other typical actions undertaken by licensees.

Besides the Campaign Against Alcohol Proxy Sales, what else are your local enforcement authorities or you doing to discourage adults buying alcohol for young people?	
Informing/educating (training and posters)	42%
Challenging/refusing	26%
Increased vigilance	23%
Nothing	20%
Policing	14%
Practical measures in premises	14%
Other	9%

Base: 98

Considering other actions, the need for greater awareness of the issues and education of adults is felt to be pivotal. Others wish to see more formal actions and harsher punishments taken against offenders, such as on-the-spot fines rather than just cautions.

What else could be done in your view to prevent adults from buying alcohol for young people?	
Raise awareness of issues/inform/educate	47%
Impose harsher punishments/enforce the Law/police presence	34%
Focus on supermarkets/off-licences (e.g. increasing cost of alcohol)	13%
Focus on parents/family	10%
Other	16%

Base: 89

Test purchasing and Age Restricted Products training

When questioned on Lancashire's test purchasing scheme, 20% of licensees (or their staff) claim they have been found to have sold alcohol to persons under the age of 18 in the last two years.

Through test purchasing, has your business been found to have sold alcohol to persons under the age of 18 within the last 1 to 2 years?	
Yes	20%
No	79%
Don't know	1%

Base: 100

Of these, a fifth (four licensees from off-sales premises) were invited to attend an Age Restricted Products training course. Three licensees attended the course and claim it was very effective in changing how they deal with young persons who try to buy alcohol.

Actions likely to be taken if found to have sold alcohol to under 18's again

Fixed penalty notices and licensing reviews are the most likely actions that licensees believe would occur should they be found to be non-compliant again.

If your business were found to have sold alcohol to a person under the age of 18 again, which of the following actions do you think would most likely be taken against your business or staff?	
Fixed penalty notice	32%
Licensing review	21%
Court appearance	16%
Formal caution	11%
Informal caution	-
Don't know/Can't say	32%

Base: 19

Action(s) that would be taken if found to be selling alcohol to under 18's

For those who claim not to have been found selling alcohol to under 18's in the last two years, 34% believe they would face a licensing review should they be found to be selling and 29% would expect to receive a fixed penalty notice.

What do you think could happen to your business if you were found to sell alcohol to a person under the age of 18?³⁷	
Licensing review	34%
Fixed penalty notice	29%
Formal caution	9%
Informal caution	8%
Court appearance	6%
Asked to attend an Age Related Products training course	4%
No action taken	1%
Don't know	10%

Base: 79

³⁷ Spontaneous answers

When asked to select the ONE action from a list of possible actions, around a quarter feel they would face a licensing review or a fixed penalty notice.

Which ONE of the following do you think would be most likely to happen to your business if you were found to sell alcohol to a person under the age of 18?	
Licensing review	26%
Fixed penalty notice	25%
Formal caution	14%
Asked to attend an Age Related Products training course	13%
Informal caution	9%
Court appearance	8%
No action taken	1%
Don't know	5%

Base: 80

Views on Age Restricted Products training courses

It was explained to licensees that those found to be selling alcohol to under 18's may be invited to attend an Age Restricted Products training course, where the cost of the course would be similar to a fixed penalty notice, as an alternative to having formal action taken against them. When asked their views on this scheme, 66% of licensees feel this approach could be effective locally.

Measures in premises

86% of licensees have CCTV on their premises, 75% have till prompts and 69% use a sales refusal book to help them combat the sale of alcohol to those under 18 and alcohol-related crime and disorder. 4% of licensees have none of these measures on their premises.

Summary evaluation for Lancashire

Lancashire has over 3,500 licensed premises and has adopted a multi-agency approach to establish a number of umbrella campaigns that target a diverse audience of young people, parents, businesses and partner agencies. One of the aims has been to break the link between alcohol and anti-social behaviour and reduce availability of alcohol to children. Much of the activity to date has therefore been around education, training and the dissemination of information to children, parents and support agencies dealing with vulnerable young people.

With between 370 and 600 test purchase attempts conducted annually, the level of underage sales compliance since April 2005 has seen a year on year improvement from 74% to 89% in 2007/08. This is consistent with the licensee survey that showed that 20% of premises admitted to selling alcohol to those under the age of 18 in the last two years.

In terms of supporting licensees, Lancashire has provided training to businesses engaged in the sale of age restricted products by running seminars roughly every quarter. Additionally it has distributed over 7,000 interactive Age Check DVD's. Through these initiatives, the partnership believes that its training and support materials have helped them achieve and exceed a target in their local area agreement of increasing the percentage of retailers who refuse to sell alcohol to underage young people from 73% to 82% by March 2009.

Another initiative employed by Lancashire has been to invite those licensees found selling to under 18's to an Offenders Age Restricted Products Training Course that is similar in cost to a fixed penalty notice. However, of the 20 licensees in the survey that admitted to have made an under-age sale, only 4 had been invited to attend such a training course.

When asked to spontaneously state the actions they believe would be taken if found to be selling alcohol to under 18's, only 4% of licensees mentioned a training course. This proportion rises to only 13% when given a list of possible actions and asked to choose one, suggesting that few licensees are aware that a training course is an available option. When told of the Age Restricted Products Training Course, two thirds of licensees think that attendance would be effective in reducing the number of underage sales.

Of all the actions that could be taken against someone if they make an under-age sale, attendance at a licensing review and the issue of a fixed penalty notice have consistently been the top two answers put forward by licensees in this survey. This shows their understanding of a move by enforcement officers' to use the licensing review process in favour of formal action through the courts.

Licensing Evaluation Study of Brighton & Hove

Brighton & Hove's multi-agency approach to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder

Project overview

Brighton & Hove is a seaside area with a successful night-time economy. The area has a high concentration of licensed premises, a high youth population and has suffered from alcohol-related problems, such as street drinking and alcohol misuse.

In April 2002 a project was devised to achieve a reduction in public place violent crime perpetrated by under 18's, and was included in the Local Public Service Agreement, (LPSA), Violent Crime Action plan developed as part of the Crime Reduction & Community Safety Strategy 2002-2005.

The activities and partnership that flowed from this plan have been recognised as best practice and were subsequently incorporated into the Home Office led Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaigns, (AMEC), the enforcement strand of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy introduced in 2004.

Since 2002 the project has grown and new initiatives have been developed. For example, the Police gained support from the local council for the introduction of a Designated Public Place Order (DPPO)³⁸, covering an easily defined area within the city. The Police identified hotspot locations and persistent offenders for street drinking. They invested heavily in Community Support Officers and gave them powers to confiscate alcohol under the DPPO. They targeted street drinking by youths, who obtained their alcohol from off-licences. Council Officers and Police break up "kids drinking parties", take the drunkest home and demand that parents exert discipline. Officers liaise with schools and social services about those whose parents appear not to care and confiscate alcohol.

Intelligence gathered from all sources is used to identify businesses that are selling alcohol to underage children. Advice and training is offered to retailers and their staff by way of Business Support Visits and effectiveness is measured by repeat test purchasing. These are joint operations between Trading Standards and the Police and have targeted both on-licence premises and off-licences.

Compliance levels vary during test purchasing exercises with 100% compliance one month to 35% another, which demonstrates the need to continually work with the business sector and encourage their staff to challenge young purchasers for some form of age linked identification. Since April 2006 an average compliance level has been achieved of 66%.

The Business Crime Partnership is used to promote good practice in pubs and clubs and help prolific offenders with drug and alcohol problems into treatment.

Operation Marble tackles public disorder and violent crime at weekends. Police officers carry out high visibility patrols in the main area of clubs and pubs and confiscate bottles retained by revellers when they come out on to the street.

Operation Haribo was an intelligence gathering operation led by the Police to see whether the perceived problem of proxy purchase actually exists in an area and if so how bad the problem is. Officers in Brighton have found that underage young people identify and target new

³⁸

<http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/alcoholorders/alcoholorders01.htm>

premises from which they can purchase alcohol. They are prepared to travel across the city to source these premises, and tend to target off-licences in the summer (when the weather is fine enough to sit outside and drink) and on-licences in the winter. They use fake identity cards, cajole vulnerable adults to purchase on their behalf and turn to theft if necessary.

In order to protect children from harm, a three year plan to prevent the sale of alcohol to children in retail premises is now included in the Crime Reduction, Community Safety & Drugs Strategy 2008-11³⁹ with an accompanying service plan.

IDeA has recently acknowledged Brighton and Hove Council's initiatives and strategies that focus on the night-time economy, and has awarded it: *After dark: managing the night-time economy* Beacon status.

Project timeline

2002-03

- Too Young to Buy Scheme implemented (Responsible retailers)
- Proof of age Scheme implemented (CitizenCard)
- Test purchase Exercises (Summer and Xmas)
- Breakfast Meetings for retailers (Feb/Mar 03)

2003-04

- Too Young to Buy Visits
- Proof of age Scheme School visits (Connexions & CitizenCard)
- Test purchase Exercises (April, June, August, October, December 03)
- Test purchase Exercises (February 04)

2004-05

- Too Young to Buy Visits
- Test Purchase exercise (Summer AMEC)
- Sign up of Businesses on No 1 Bus Route to TYTB (Aug – Oct 04)
- Too Young to Buy Visits promotion with schools (Sept 04)
- Too Young to Buy Bus advertising (Nov 04)
- Test purchase Exercise (Xmas AMEC)
- Promotion of No ID No sale (CitizenCard, Connexions, PASS Cards etc)

2005-06

- Too Young to Buy Visits
- Mini AMEC (Mar/Apr 05)
- Test Purchase exercise (May/June)
- Test purchase exercise (Summer 05)
- Enough Campaign (Sept – Nov 05)
- AMEC 3 (Dec 05)
- Bottled Water campaign (Summer 05)
- Think 21 Message introduced (Mar 06)

2006-07

- Operation Mixer and Operation Alcopop 2 (March-April 2006)⁴⁰
- AMEC4 (May-July 06)
- Operation Mixer (August 06)

³⁹ Crime Reduction, Community Safety & Drugs Strategy 2008-11
http://www.safeinthecity.info/?q=publications/test_publication

⁴⁰ Operation Mixer – Targets underage sales at Off-licence.
Operation Alcopop – Targets underage sales at On-licence

- Tackling the Underage Sales of Alcohol to Children Campaign TUSAC (October 06)
- Operation Mixer (December 06)
- Licence Reviews and Under age sales Training (February 07)

2007-08

- Underage Sales Training (April, June, September 07)
- TUSAC – Section 147A Offences (May – July 07)
- Licence Review Premises only (October – November 07)
- Operation Highlight (Educational) (November 07)
- Licence Reviews (December 07)
- Operation Mixer (December 07)
- Operation Alcopop 3 (February 08)
- Underage Sales Training (February 08)
- Operation Mixer (March 08)

2008-09

- Underage Sales Training (May-June, September - October 08)
- Operation Alcopop 3 Part 2 and Operation Mixer (June 08)
- Operation Mixer (July 08)
- Operation Haribo – Proxy Purchase Police led (August 08)
- Operation Alcopop 3 Part 3 and new premises (October 08)
- Operation Mixer (November 08)
- Underage Sales Training (Proposed date December 08)

National and local objectives

Brighton and Hove is working towards achieving a range of national and local objectives which together are expected to address the alcohol-related problems that are being experienced.

The total level of police recorded crime has remained stable between 2004/05 and 2006/07 at around 32,500 crimes, though early signs for 2007/08 are encouraging, with a 15.8% reduction in the British Crime Survey Comparator Crimes in the first nine months compared with the same months in 2006/07. Overall, good reductions have been achieved in vehicle crime, domestic burglary, personal robbery and wounding offences.

The aim is to reduce rates of and fear of crime and anti-social behaviour through the following activities:

- Decrease perceptions of antisocial behaviour from 36% to 32.5% in 08/09
- Reduce the re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders to 27% in 08/09
- Reduce the number of incidents of domestic violence
- Reduce the drug-related (Class A) offending rate
- Reduce alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates
- Reduce number of hate crimes

Brighton is using a variety of national and local indicators within its LAA ⁴¹ to monitor the impact of alcohol misuse and the effectiveness of its strategies for reducing the harm caused by alcohol misuse including:

⁴¹ Source: Brighton & Hove LAA 2008-11
http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/downloads/bhcc/performance_team/Brighton_and_Hove_LAA_240608_final.pdf
 The rationale of each Indicator is given in Appendix 1.

- NI 17 – Perceptions of anti-social behaviour
- NI 20 - Assault with injury crime (local target only)
- NI 30 – Re-offending rate of prolific and other priority offenders
- NI 32 – Repeat incidents of domestic violence
- NI 39 – Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates

Local strategies and plans

The 2020 Community Partnership⁴² launched its 20 year Strategy for the City during 2007. One objective of this strategy is reducing crime and improving safety; it is being tackled through the Brighton & Hove Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008-11. The priorities of this strategy reflect PSA 25.

Project objectives

The objectives of the project are to:

- Assist in achieving a reduction in alcohol induced violence by under 18's
- Assist in reducing incidents of alcohol fuelled anti social behaviour and disorder
- Prevent the sale of alcohol to children by licensed premises by providing advice and support to enable the sellers to refuse a sale confidently

Delivery of the project

The project is delivered through the joint working of Environmental Health and Licensing, Joint Community Safety Team, Police Standards Unit – Home Office and Trading Standards, and activities include:

- Proactive targeting of new licensed premises, and premises with changes in premises licence holders, Designated Premises Supervisors, or a high turnover of staff
- Intelligence led test purchase exercises
- Intelligence led education test purchase exercises, e.g. Operation Highlight, November 2007
- The promotion of a consistent age limit and age verification message. This was initially through the promotion of the Citizencard, followed by a Connexions' card issued through schools and a 'No ID No sale' initiative directed at businesses. However, the introduction of Think 21/Challenge 21 led to a move away from the No ID No Sale approach, which required staff to think 18 when deciding whether or not to ask for ID. Businesses are provided with posters and other material relating to Think 21.
- Bespoke training on 'How to identify an under 18 and refuse a sale of alcohol'.
- Educating sellers to be able to confidently identify fake IDs.
- The provision of 'Train the Trainer' for those premises who can provide their own training.
- The provision of training for other Trading Standards personnel in the region to ensure a consistent message is given to premises that operate regionally or nationally.
- Proactive discussions with new premises of concern and appropriate use of the Representation process.

⁴² 2020 Community partnership documentation from internet
<http://www.2020community.org/index.cfm?request=a702>

- Using the licence review process where appropriate
- Trading Standards Officers visiting premises if intelligence indicates that a business is either selling alcohol to children or they are able to obtain alcohol from the premises via alternative routes.

The premises licence holder is provided with advice and support to “put their house in order.” The same process is implemented where a premises fails a test purchase. Officers also assist individual businesses by undertaking a risk assessment regarding the sale of all age-restricted products. Issues considered include:

- Types of age restricted products sold.
- Positioning of age restricted products.
- Visibility within the shop.
- The position of the till/sales counter.
- Other conflicting products, e.g. lottery – time restraints.
- Staffing levels.
- Language barriers, cultural barriers, difficulty judging ages, difficulty dealing with conflict situations, etc.
- How any CCTV is used and the position of the cameras and monitors.
- Identifying correct forms of ID and ensuring staff are able to identify genuine and fake ID and feel confident in doing so and undertaking an effective challenge.
- Immediate vicinity and risks.
- Other outside risk factors, e.g. schools, deliveries, underage events.
- Use of refusals register to identify higher risk times and staff not undertaking any refusals.

The purpose of this exercise is to educate businesses to think for themselves, to identify potential risks, to assess the level of risk and to consider realistic ways of dealing with/minimising the risk.

Details of operations undertaken during 2007/08 can be found in Case Study Evaluation Appendices - Appendix B1.

During 2008, the Police led Operation Haribo. This was an intelligence gathering operation to quantify the problem of proxy purchases, provide a clear message to the public and identify the types of premises adults prefer to purchase from. Young volunteers asked members of the public to buy alcohol for them. Anyone who agreed and actually entered licensed premises to do so was intercepted before the offence was committed. Full details were taken from them and a warning given.

Three locations were selected. The first was a local shopping area and the volunteer stood between a supermarket and a dedicated off-licence. Of 19 people approached only 4 agreed to make a purchase and they all moved towards the supermarket. It was at this location that the team was pleased that a significant number of adults declined to buy alcohol, stating that they were fearful of being fined if caught. However, it was also at this location that the volunteer was approached by an adult offering to buy her whatever she wanted.

The second location had a more transitory feel, with people passing through rather than shopping. The volunteer was positioned just along from a medium sized convenience store selling a mix of goods including alcohol and across the road from a small convenience store selling predominantly alcohol. Of 5 adults approached, 3 were willing to buy alcohol and all favoured the larger of the two stores.

The third location was on the same street but 110 to 150 metres further along, close to a smaller convenience store. Again it is a transitory area that people pass through on their way to the city centre. At this location 4 out of 5 adults would have purchased alcohol for the volunteer.

The results of the exercise suggest that those willing to buy alcohol for underage young people prefer to make their purchase from larger premises, where they have a choice. If given no choice they are still willing to buy from smaller stores.

Success measures

Crime statistics

Reducing public place violent crime was seen as a problem for the city and restricting access to alcohol by children a key activity in achieving this outcome. The crime statistics for Brighton and Hove can be found in Case Study Evaluation Appendices - Appendix B2. These demonstrate that after peaking in 2006-7 there has been a steady reduction in the figures. The last recorded statistics presented to the Community Safety Forum in July 2008 shows that serious assaults are down 16.7% and less serious assaults down by 16.1%.

The Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008-2011 Performance and Activity Report (up to September 2008) indicates that for Alcohol Misuse and Alcohol-Related Crime and Disorder, the number of Serious Violence (GBH+) incidents per month have fluctuated between 7 and 15 in the six months to September 2008 compared to between 9 and 21 for the same period in 2007 and between 10 and 18 in 2006. Serious Violence and Assault with Less Serious Injury (ABH) show a continued good decrease (27% and 15% reduction respectively) compared with the same period in 2007/08. A&E patients attendances as a result of an assault are also down compared with last year, but to a lesser extent (down 4%). However, assaults recorded by the ambulance service have increased (April to end of August) by 12%. Supporting data is given in Case Study Evaluation Appendices - Appendix B3.

The activities that have been carried out to assist in achieving these reductions can be found in Brighton and Hove's Community Safety & Crime Reduction Action Plan.

Compliance rates

Compliance rates for each of the test purchase exercises conducted since April 2006 are given in Case Study Evaluation Appendices - Appendix B4. In 2006, 2007 and 2008 the annual average level of compliance has been 62%, 80%, and 62% respectively.

The level of compliance varies between exercises, but this can be due to a number of factors, such as the knowledge, experience and confidence of the sales assistant to challenge a purchaser and ask for some form of aged linked ID; the ability of the sales assistant to calculate age from the date of birth on an ID; the support and training provided by the retailer; the appearance and age of the young purchaser; whether the retailer has received a recent business support visit from Trading Standards; and any recent underage sales media coverage. A young looking purchaser will more readily be refused a purchase and this will increase the level of compliance. However, where compliance levels are linked to appropriate interventions by Trading Standards and partners a test purchase will demonstrate how effective the initiative has been.

A good example of this is the Tackling Underage Sales of Alcohol Campaign (TUSAC) 2007. In this campaign up to 20 target premises were subject to a 10 week campaign when test purchases were attempted on up to 5 occasions. Where businesses sold alcohol they were offered a Business Support Visit (BSV) within a 2 week period prior to the next test purchase. Of the target premises, 8 sold alcohol to an underage person on the first visit. Of these 7 agreed to a BSV and only one then went on to sell a second time. All other premises which received a BSV passed all other tests during TUSAC 2007. In all, 2 of the 20 premises sold alcohol on a second occasion.

During 2007/08 approximately 70 underage sales BSV's have been undertaken. Officers from Trading Standards have been accompanied on occasions by officers from the Police Licensing Unit. Between 150 and 200 people have received training on how to prevent sales of age restricted products to children. Of those premises which have received the training following an underage sale, only 2 have sold again during an underage test purchase exercise.

Since the introduction of these initiatives, there has been a reduction in the number of intelligence reports relating to alcohol. Interestingly those relating to cigarettes have increased. It is not possible to quantify these changes at present.

Brighton and Hove argues that it has been successful in improving compliance rates in those areas where problems have been identified and this success is demonstrated by an increase in displacement issues as young people source other retailers who may be willing to sell them alcohol.

Changing behaviour of young people

It is accepted that young people will always seek access to alcohol. When work is undertaken with premises to improve their compliance, it is Brighton and Hove's view that this only deals with one part of the problem and fails to deal with the actual behaviour of young people. Intelligence reports demonstrate that youngsters will use alternative techniques such as moving to another area of the city (by way of example, a premises in Saltdean was taken to a Licence Review. This resulted in children being unable to obtain alcohol in the vicinity so they displaced to Woodingdean in the summer 2007). They simply identify new premises or isolated premises and target these or use diversionary tactics.

Where young people are consistently asked for an ID, it is commonplace for them to start to use fake IDs or to alter their passports. However, where training has enabled staff to spot these false IDs, then they have turned to altering their passports or producing genuine ID but presenting in such away that sales staff have missed that they are underage.

As an alternative to buying alcohol directly themselves, young people will ask adults to buy alcohol on their behalf. They have been known to set up schemes whereby they order their alcohol and a friend or relative bulk buys it for the group and delivers it to them. This is similar to school shopping lists, whereby a list is circulated at school for pupils to order alcohol. At the end of the week an older brother or friend bulk buys the alcohol from a supermarket. They arrange to meet, the money is collected and the alcohol distributed.

Other methods used by young people to obtain alcohol include intimidating retail staff, using distraction tactics, mass invasion of premises, theft, targeting cheap restaurants as venues for 18th birthday parties and wearing 18th and 21st birthday badges.

Satisfaction of businesses

Business satisfaction is a key indicator of satisfaction with this initiative and each business is given a survey form at the conclusion of each Business Support Visit. This survey is not

specific to 'age restricted products' and returned forms are anonymous so licensed premises are not readily identifiable. Business satisfaction overall has been maintained at around 91% year on year for the last 4 years.

Evaluation forms are requested from those who receive training and these indicate a high level of satisfaction. Officers have also received thank you letters.

Other benefits

Other benefits from this initiative have been:

- Improved profile with elected members, the Police, and businesses
- Improved motivation of officers
- Increased intelligence from businesses and the public activities to be targeted more effectively
- Development of partnerships with certain businesses which has helped improve relationships wider than just age restricted product compliance

Consultation

In 2001 the Council organised an 'Alcohol' Seminar when interested parties met to discuss how to tackle the perceived problem with alcohol use and misuse in the city.

Consultation with the public has also been carried out by the Joint Community Safety Partnership Team as part of the development of the Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy 2008-11 (Hallmark 2 in Case Study Evaluation Appendices - Appendix B5). Further, the Team has started to carry out strategic assessments as part of the National Intelligence Model approach.

Training

Shop Staff training is aimed at a commonsense level to give staff the tools and confidence to undertake an effective challenge and prevent underage sales. The format of the training is an interactive and informal workshop, allowing the sharing of personal experiences and best practice. There is a hands-on session with fake and genuine forms of ID and practical examples of how to prevent and deal with aggression, steps/tactics children use to obtain alcohol and good practice. The training also addresses the issue of why people still sell alcohol to children despite knowing the law, problems associated with operating a Think 21 or similar procedure and the difficulties in judging age. It also covers engaging with sales staff, enabling them to identify with the social implications of children drinking alcohol and enabling them to identify the problems associated with their specific type of employer/premises.

Business training is aimed at assisting businesses to identify and address the risks associated with selling alcohol and other age restricted products, by looking at the products and the particular problems associated with it, problems associated with the location of the premises, the layout of the store, risks associated with the type or style of business, and risks associated with the staff employed. This training is aimed at educating businesses to effectively manage the business whilst preventing underage sales. It helps to raise their awareness of problems by having a fresh eye looking at it. It can also assist them in building a team mentality with their staff. Materials provided to businesses include Think 21 signage, shelf edgers, training packs, refusals books, alternative underage sales posters, posters for staff to assist with the correct form of ID, CCTV posters, etc.

Measuring the effectiveness of training

The effectiveness of the training is not directly measured by the Council and Police. However, retailers are thought to have seen an increase in the number of refusals recorded in their refusals registers as well as a desire by staff to discuss issues relating to age challenges and

underage sales with managers. A national supermarket, for example, claimed that prior to training these issues had not been raised by staff.

Similarly, within hours of providing training to an on-licence premises, staff reported that they had identified two young people attempting to buy alcohol with fake IDs. Anecdotal evidence from managers and staff indicates that after training the staff feel that they have the support of management and have more confidence to challenge young purchasers. They also find themselves in less situations of conflict.

The premises of a national off-licence group have also given positive feedback. Before a failed test purchase and subsequent training, a store within the group had one of the highest records of refusals. Despite this, the number of refusals has further increased since the training, the increase being due to better identification of fake IDs.

Young volunteers and the undercover officers provide feedback to the Trading Standards Service on the effectiveness of challenges and any other relevant information, which also feeds into the evaluation of the training.

As further testament to the effectiveness of training, three national retailers with local branches have asked for further training for new staff. Furthermore, one of them has incorporated Brighton and Hove's training materials into their own corporate training package. Feedback forms for the training sessions also show a high level of satisfaction.

There is also clear evidence that the training and support being given to retailers is producing more confident and effective staff. By way of example, a young person known to a national supermarket sales assistant approached her directly to ask whether she would sell alcohol to him despite not having any ID. Even though she declined, he went and selected alcohol from the aisle, returned to the kiosk, pushed in front of other customers and attempted to buy it. She told him to join the queue although she also told him not to bother as he would not be served anyway as he did not have ID. At this point he left the shop with the alcohol, became violent when detained by the Police and gave false details, though the assistant was able to provide the correct ones.

How the premises and staff requiring training have been determined

Most new higher risk premises are invited to meet with the Trading Standards Service and Police Licensing Unit to discuss the issues around underage sales, risk activities, fake IDs and any proposed licensing conditions. During this meeting, having been shown examples of fake and altered IDs etc, businesses are offered the training session and sent an invite and booking form for the next set of training.

Training sessions are also offered to those premises where intelligence has been received about them and a business support visit has been undertaken. Also, where premises fail a test purchase they too are offered a business support visit and, if they take up this offer, they are then offered training.

Depending on the circumstances of the failures and the number of staff, training is often provided to the premises within a matter of weeks rather than waiting for the next set of training. Other premises are invited to receive training where there is evidence of alcohol-related youth disorder in the vicinity or where training has been offered to a neighbouring premises and there is concern about displacement to other premises close by.

All sales staff and managers are recommended to receive the training. In respect of the larger premises, e.g. large superstores, training has been provided to till supervisors and they have then filtered it to other staff. Although this can dilute the effectiveness of the training, it is

accepted that current resources do not permit the training of supermarkets with 200+ sales staff.

Cost and funding

Financial Year 2006/2007

Some "Preventing Underage Sales" Training was undertaken towards the end of the financial year and it is considered that the time spent on this activity equates to approximately 20 officer hours, costing around £500.

Business Support Visits were undertaken during the course of the whole year but with particular emphasis during and immediately after the November 2006 TUSAC operation. It is considered that this activity took approximately 200 officer hours, costing some £5000.

Financial Year 2007/2008

Approximately 70 Business Support Visits were completed in 2007/2008. These visits took approximately 1 hour and were undertaken by 1 or 2 officers. Adding travelling time, each visit took 2 to 4 officer hours equating to a total of 140 to 280 hours costing in the region of £3500 to £7000.

Over the same period up to 200 people received the "Preventing Underage Sales" Training. Based on group sizes of 5 to 10 people, deployment of 1 to 2 trainers and an average session length of 2.5 hours it is estimated that a total of 100 officer hours were used costing approximately £2500.

Financial Year 2008/2009

Figures are not currently available for this financial year but it is considered that the number of officer hours spent on Business Support Visits will be similar to 2007/2008. It is further considered that the number of officer hours spent training sales staff will be approximately 100 hours. The total cost therefore is likely to be in the region of £6000 to £9500.

The only additional funds came from joint bids in each of the Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaigns and subsequent campaigns led by the Home Office. These funds contributed to the Test Purchasing Exercises only. All other activity was funded solely from the Trading Standards budget.

Obstacles and barriers

The main barriers faced during the implementation of this project have been around internal politics and personality differences.

In giving consideration as to what might have been done differently, early consideration should have been given to forming a dedicated team of officers from different disciplines including Trading Standards, the Police Licensing Team, Neighbourhood Policing teams, Youth Workers and Community Participation Officers. This would have enabled the problem to have been tackled in a holistic way and provide a stronger counter to those young people who are determined to obtain and consume alcohol.

Publicity

This project has been fairly well publicised, having featured 3 times on Meridian TV news and in current affairs programmes. It has also been covered in regular press releases.

Licensee survey for Brighton

Background to the business survey

A short telephone survey was undertaken amongst licensees⁴³ in the Brighton and Hove area during February 2009 to establish the extent of their awareness of the tools and initiatives being implemented by their local enforcement authorities to prevent underage sales of alcohol and alcohol-related crime and disorder, their effectiveness, usage and participation in the initiatives and those that might help them avoid sales to persons under the age of 18 in the future. It also explored issues around enforcement, whether they had been found to sell to young people, and actions that might be taken against them if they were to offend in the future.

In total 104 licensed premises were interviewed; 42 selling alcohol for consumption on premises, 48 selling alcohol for consumption off premises and 14 selling for consumption both on and off premises. 48 businesses are independents whilst 56 are part of a chain or franchise.

Existence of problems in the area

Over nine in ten licensees recall problems in the Brighton area that prompted the local authority and police to develop initiatives to deal with them. The most commonly mentioned problem was young people attempting to buy alcohol.

Thinking back over the past two years, which of the following problems existed in your local area resulting in your local authority and the police developing initiatives to deal with them?	
Young people trying to buy alcohol	68%
Incidence of public disorder	57%
Street drinking by young people	52%
Incidence of anti-social behaviour generally amongst young people	50%
Customers or members of the public being intimidated by young people	45%
Number of complaints received around anti-social behaviour	43%
Young people congregating around alcohol licensed premises	43%
Levels of alcohol-related litter (i.e. cans, bottles)	39%
Incidents of adults buying alcohol for young people	37%
Intimidation and threats to staff	34%
Don't know	5%
None of these	7%

Base: 100

⁴³ The sample database from which licensees were drawn was provided by the local authority with additional sample sourced from Yell.com. Where figures in tables do not sum to 100%, this is due to rounding.

Of the problems listed below, the two most commonly experienced problems are verbal abuse and threats and intimidation of staff.

Which of the following has your business experienced?	
Verbal abuse of staff	65%
Threats/intimidation of staff	51%
Threats/intimidation of customers	38%
Theft of alcohol by young people	37%
Violence towards staff	29%
Don't know	2%
None of these	24%

Base: 97

Almost a quarter of those interviewed claim to have never experienced any of the listed problems.

Licensees' awareness of initiatives run in Brighton and Hove

Overall 93% of licensees are aware of the Think /Challenge campaigns; 86% specifically of Think 21/Challenge 21 and 58% of Think 25/Challenge 25. Awareness of the test purchasing regime is also high, especially amongst chain stores (93% compared to 77% of independents).

Awareness of the expansion of CCTV schemes is greatest amongst on-sales licensees (82% vs. 61% for off-sales licensees) whereas off-sales licensees are more familiar with the training courses (68% vs. 48%).

Which of the following initiatives and tools do you think are being used by your local authority and the police to help licensed premises address underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?	
Think 21/Challenge 21	86%
Enforcement through test purchasing, measuring compliance of licensed premises	86%
Expansion of CCTV schemes (plus radio links and Pubwatch – for on-sales)	69%
Confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places	68%
Support with the identification of fake IDs	68%
Posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials	67%
High visibility policing	65%
Appearing before local authority licensing committee for review of premises' licence	64%
Training courses	59%
Think 25/Challenge 25	58%
Guidance on alcohol advertising in licensed premises	51%
Breaking up young people's drinking parties in public places	49%
Best Bar None Awards*	34%
None of these	2%

* Asked to on-sales premises only; sample size 56

Base: 104

34% believe that the Best Bar None Awards scheme is being run in Brighton although this is not currently the case⁴⁴.

Effectiveness of initiatives

Of those aware of the Think/Challenge campaigns, 88% believe that they are effective in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder; 72% describe them as very effective.

Some seven in ten licensees feel that high visibility policing, enforcement through test purchasing, the expansion of CCTV (plus radio link and Pubwatch for on-sales), the use of posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials that inform staff of the issues and support with identifying fake IDs are effective overall (those saying *very* or *fairly* effective).

How effective would you say [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?						
	Think 21/25 - Challenge 21/25	High visibility policing	Enforcement through test purchasing	Expansion of CCTV scheme	Posters, leaflets, DVDs, etc	Support with identifying fake IDs
Very effective	72%	44%	47%	44%	23%	40%
Fairly effective	16%	33%	28%	27%	48%	30%
Not very effective	7%	17%	6%	20%	20%	20%
Not at all effective	1%	3%	7%	3%	1%	1%
Don't know	4%	3%	13%	7%	7%	9%
Base (those aware) :	95	66	88	71	69	70

Around two-thirds feel that guidance on alcohol advertising, training courses and appearances before the licensing committee for a review of premises' licences are effective and just over half believe that the confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places and the breaking up of young people's public drinking parties are effective initiatives.

How effective would you say [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?						
	Guidance on alcohol advertising	Training courses	Appearance before licensing committee for review	Confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places	Breaking up young people's drinking parties	Best Bar None Awards
Very effective	17%	43%	33%	23%	16%	26%
Fairly effective	50%	23%	33%	31%	37%	5%
Not very effective	21%	12%	3%	23%	20%	11%
Not at all effective	4%	-	2%	6%	4%	16%
Don't know	8%	22%	29%	17%	24%	42%
Base (those aware) :	52	60	66	70	51	19

While 31% believe the Best Bar None Awards to be effective it is little surprise that 42% have felt unable to express an opinion since the scheme is no longer running in Brighton.

⁴⁴ The local authority ran the Best Bar None Awards scheme in joint partnership with the police two to three years ago although it is understood not to have been continued after the first year.

Local authority and police initiatives used or participated in

The Think/Challenge campaigns have attracted the highest levels of participation in Brighton. 89% of licensees have implemented one of these.

Which of the following local authority and police initiatives and tools have you used or participated in?	
Think 21/25 - Challenge 21/25	89%
Posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials that inform staff	52%
CCTV schemes (plus radio link, Pubwatch in on-sales premises)	51%
Support with the identification of fake IDs	51%
Training courses	30%
Receiving guidance on alcohol advertising in your premises	26%
Best Bar None Awards*	13%
Appearing before the local authority licensing committee for a review	11%
None of these	3%

* Asked to on-sales premises only; sample size 52

Base: 99

Head office related support

Amongst licensees who are part of a chain or franchise 89% receive support from their head office in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder. This ranges from staff training materials, such as induction training, DVDs, guidance booklets (Do's and Don'ts), to Think 21/25 posters and badges, BIAAB training, in-store test purchasing schemes and designated Business Development Managers with responsibility for the dissemination of information on any legal changes.

Informed of progress and successes of local initiatives and support offered

Just 46% of licensees feel they are kept well informed of the progress and successes of the initiatives in Brighton and Hove; 38% feel they are ill-informed.

How well informed to you feel about the progress and successes of the initiatives in Brighton?			
How well do you feel the police and local authority support you in dealing with issues around underage sales of alcohol and crime and disorder?			
Very well informed	9%	Very well supported	23%
Fairly well informed	37%	Fairly well supported	33%
Neither	11%	Neither	12%
Fairly ill-informed	21%	Fairly poorly supported	14%
Very ill-informed	17%	Very poorly supported	12%
Don't know	5%	Don't know/Can't say	6%

Base: 100

Base: 100

Similarly, whilst 56% of licensees feel they are well supported by their local authority and the police 26% disagree, claiming they are *poorly* supported.

When specifically asked how the local authority and police could better support licensees, 59% indicated that they would like authorities to work more closely with licensees, providing better communication and visiting their premises more often to discuss the initiatives and issues around underage sales. Amongst others, a greater number of high visibility police patrols and faster response times are called for.

How could the police and local authority support you better?	
Work more effectively with business / provide support	59%
Policing/visibility	45%
Authorities already doing good job	23%
Other	9%

Base: 92

Looking at the additional actions that the police and local authority could take, 34% of licensees again suggest a need for additional police patrols and improved response times. Other comments focus on greater enforcement of offending premises and a need to restrict alcohol sales through supermarkets.

What else could the police and local authority be doing to tackle issues around underage access to alcohol and crime and disorder in the community?	
Police visibility/effectiveness	34%
Deal with offending licensees/look at accessibility/branding of alcohol	31%
Deal with/speak to children/schools/work with youngsters	23%
Doing well/ nothing more they can do	13%
Speak to parents/wider society	12%
Look at proxy sales	8%
Other	5%

Base: 83

Around a quarter of licensees wish to see the authorities taking a firmer stance with children and young people, with more formal action being taken against those caught buying and drinking alcohol, rather than just focusing on licensees. Educating young people is seen as part of this process.

Measures that can assist businesses in the future

The majority of licensees believe that all the listed measures would assist them in some way in avoiding sales of alcohol to under 18's in future. Guidance on how to spot fake IDs, having the contact telephone number of enforcement officers and additional customer focused promotional materials are the most commonly selected measures.

Which of the following could help your business avoid selling alcohol in the future to persons under the age of 18?	
Guidance on how to identify fake IDs	75%
Having a contact telephone number of enforcement officers who can attend premises when an underage purchase is attempted	74%
More promotional material informing customers about underage sales	73%
Guidance on refusing sales to young people	54%
Enforcement officers in premises to help staff when young people try to buy	47%
Better understanding of legislation	45%
None of these	4%

Base: 99

Challenging and refusing sales to those suspected of buying alcohol for young people are said to be the actions taken by licensees. Few licensees could recall measures undertaken by the local authorities.

What are you or your local enforcement authorities doing to discourage adults buying alcohol for young people?	
Challenging/refusing	40%
Informing/educating (training and posters)	35%
Increasing vigilance	24%
Practical measures in premises	13%
Not a problem for us	13%
Policing	8%

Base: 93

13% of licensees have introduced practical measures in their premises, such as hiring doormen or restricting times when children are allowed in the venue.

Test purchasing and Business Support Visits

When questioned about test purchasing, 21% of licensees claim they or their staff have been found to have sold alcohol to persons under the age of 18 in the last two years. Of these, 86% received a Business Support Visit from their local enforcement officer.

Through test purchasing, has your business been found to have sold alcohol to persons under the age of 18 within the last 1 to 2 years?	
Yes	21%
No	75%
Don't know	4%

Base: 100

Did you receive a Business Support Visit from your local enforcement officers?	
Yes	86%
No	10%
Don't know	5%

Base: 21

This visit was felt to have been effective in changing the way the premises deals with young persons trying to buy alcohol; 84% of licensees claimed this.

How effective do you feel it was in changing how you deal with young persons who try to buy alcohol?	
Very effective	67%
Fairly effective	17%
Not very effective	17%
Not at all effective	-
Don't know	-

Base: 18

The two businesses that did not receive a Business Support Visit both report being cautioned and receiving a fixed penalty notice instead.

Actions likely to be taken if found to have sold alcohol to under 18's again

Receiving a Business Support Visit from a local enforcement officer or a licensing review are the actions expected from the greatest proportion of licensees.

If your business were found to have sold alcohol to a person under the

age of 18 again, which of the following actions do you think would most likely be taken against your business or staff?	
Receive a Business Support Visit	57%
Licensing review	52%
Formal caution	43%
Fixed penalty notice	38%
Receive an informal caution	33%
Court appearance	33%
Don't know/Can't say	5%

Base: 21

Action(s) that would be taken if found to be selling alcohol to under 18's

Of those who claim not to have been found selling alcohol to under 18's in the last two years, the majority suspect they (or their staff) would face a fixed penalty notice if they were found to be doing so. Just over half say the same when read a list of possible actions and asked to choose the most likely outcome.

What do you think would happen to your business if you were found to sell alcohol to a person under the age of 18?⁴⁵	
Fixed penalty notice	74%
Licensing review	49%
Formal caution	17%
Court appearance	12%
Informal caution	4%
Asked to attend a training course	3%
Receive a Business Support Visit	1%
No action taken	3%
Don't know	1%

Base: 69

Which ONE of the following do you think would be most likely to happen to your business if you were found to sell alcohol to a person under the age of 18?	
Fixed penalty notice	52%
Formal caution	14%
Licensing review	13%
Informal caution	6%
Court appearance	5%
Asked to attend an Age Related Products training course	4%
Receive a Business Support Visit	1%
No action taken	-
Don't know	4%

Base: 79

⁴⁵ Spontaneous answers

Views on Age Restricted Products training courses

It was explained to licensees that some local authorities offer attendance at an Age Restricted Products training course to those found to have sold alcohol to under 18's as an alternative to having formal action taken against them. The charge for the course would be similar to the cost of a fixed penalty notice.

When asked their views, 80% of licensees feel this approach could be effective locally in discouraging businesses from selling alcohol to persons under the age of 18.

Measures in premises

70% of licensees use a sales refusal book, 69% have CCTV on their premises and 44% have till prompts to help them combat the sale of alcohol to those under 18 and alcohol-related crime and disorder. 14% of licensees claim to have none of these measures.

Summary evaluation for Brighton & Hove

Over the past six years Brighton has adopted a multi-agency approach and has run a number of initiatives designed to raise awareness of underage access to alcohol and prevent sales to under 18s. With over 1300 licensed premises, Brighton's initiatives have sought to target specific problems and hotspots, types of premises and new licensees rather than taking a thinner, blanket coverage approach.

Over the past three years officers have run up to six test purchasing operations a year, aimed at either on-sales premises or off-licences, making between 100 and 200 attempted purchases annually. Whilst the levels of compliance have varied over that period, the approach adopted by Brighton has been to provide support to businesses found to fail an underage sales test purchase rather than penalise them through formal action. During 2007/08, of seventy businesses that received a Business Support Visit as a result of an underage sale, only two went on to sell a second time during a test purchase.

While the compliance levels amongst previously failed premises are very positive, it is possible that the focused approach taken by Brighton has proved counter-productive to those outside its target areas in terms of perceptions of enforcement activity and business support. This has resulted in a somewhat disappointing finding that a significant proportion of licensees feel they are poorly supported and ill-informed by their enforcement authorities. This is also reflected in responses from licensees when they were asked to spontaneously name the action that would be taken against them if they were found to have sold alcohol to a person under the age of 18. Two thirds think they would be issued with a fixed penalty notice and only 1% has referred to a Business Support Visit.

21% of licensees have admitted in the licensee survey to selling alcohol to young people in the last two years, which is consistent with the level found by Brighton's officers in 2007, (20%) but half that determined in 2008, (38%). 86% of the offenders received a BSV, of which 84% claim this approach to be effective. This is again comparable with the results found by Brighton's own officers where 1 in 7 (14%) went on to sell again.

The partnership in Brighton has used a number of different initiatives to tackle underage and proxy sales of alcohol, targeting hot spot areas identified through intelligence gathering operations. Whilst these have seen some success, other premises that have not had the same level of attention are instead seen to offer opportunities for young people to purchase alcohol. The partnership clearly recognises that the initiatives they have undertaken have led to displacement and this has prompted them to include premises that have recently been granted a licence. A widening of the activities undertaken to date, combined with greater publicity of the initiatives in general, could help improve licensees' views on the support they receive although undertaking a broader and sustained level of activity may require additional or a reallocation of existing resources.

The survey has identified that 14% of licensees do not have till prompts, a refusals book or CCTV on their premises. At the very least all premises should have a refusals book and this finding further demonstrates that these premises could benefit from a Business Support Visit.

The licensees surveyed have asked for additional police patrols and improved response times and suggest that action should be taken against the young people buying alcohol, rather than just against the seller. The education and awareness programmes about the dangers of alcohol, aimed at young people, are in place in Brighton but are outside the remit of this evaluation.

Licensing Evaluation Study of Community Alcohol Partnerships

Cambridgeshire's multi-agency approach to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder

Project overview

In Cambridgeshire, Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAPs) have been formed to tackle underage alcohol consumption and the associated harms to health and society. There are currently two CAPs; one based in the market town of St Neots, Cambridgeshire which has successfully completed its pilot phase, and one in Cambridge City (currently in the pilot phase).

Both CAPs bring together a variety of interested agencies to work collaboratively to tackle alcohol-related problems. The CAPs focus on achieving safer communities by targeting anti-social behaviour and crime and disorder. Citizens are encouraged to behave in a respectful way to ensure communities are free from anti-social behaviour. In addition, CAPs aim to protect young people from both short and long term health issues associated with alcohol misuse.

Cambridgeshire County Council Trading Standards has been awarded the nationally recognised Beacon Status for the category of Cutting red tape: delivering real economic and social benefit through better local regulation. CAPs was one of several projects that contributed to Cambridgeshire's success.

National and local objectives

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008-2011⁴⁶ for Cambridgeshire identifies five key goals:

- **Growth.** Accommodating growth, creating flagship communities and ensuring the benefits of growth and infrastructure are enjoyed by all communities.
- **Economic prosperity.** Supporting the special role of Cambridgeshire as a centre of knowledge and innovation, especially in low carbon technologies.
- **Environmental sustainability.** Meeting the challenges of climate change while maintaining a high quality environment.
- **Equality and inclusion.** Supporting vulnerable groups enabling them to participate fully in community life, and encouraging healthier and more sustainable lifestyles.
- **Strong communities.** Engaging citizens in service planning and improvement and ensuring communities enjoy good quality of life and health, with low level crime, employment, discrimination and inequalities.

The LAA draft Action Plans⁴⁷ that support these goals include the following activities (monitored through National Indicators 15, 16, 17, 32 and 115):

⁴⁶ LAA 2008-2011: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/774C1C91-75A0-4D6C-8B5D-419380255C7D/0/LAA.pdf>

⁴⁷ LAA Draft Action Plans: <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/7A21CCE6-34C8-4D3A-A95D-AA10D59811A5/0/ListofNationalIndicatorsinCambsLAA.doc>

- Alcohol test purchasing operations
- Joint licensing work
- Undertaking joint enforcement visits with the Police to monitor licensed premises to ensure compliance with licence conditions and controlling unauthorised and inappropriate sales of alcohol
- Support for the multi-agency approach of the Community Alcohol Partnership

Local strategies and plans

The CAPs link into the multi-agency Cambridgeshire Alcohol Strategy 2008-2011⁴⁸ and Local Public Sector Agreements (LPSA) reward bids⁴⁹. The Strategy prioritises:

- Specialist alcohol treatment
- Targeted education and prevention for children and young persons
- Engaging with licensees with regard to sales to young people, community safety, crime and anti-social behaviour with particular emphasis on the night-time economy
- Building long-term, neighbourhood partnerships to provide longer term solutions to specific problems of violence and anti-social behaviour

Objectives of the Community Alcohol Partnership project

The overall aim of the Community Alcohol Partnership is to tackle underage alcohol consumption and reduce the negative impacts it has on health and society. However, it also seeks to change the cultures of partner agencies so that partnership working is embedded, automatic and continues indefinitely. The specific objectives of the CAP are to:

- Reduce harm to society and victims through better enforcement of the existing legislative toolkit
- Deliver cultural change within Cambridgeshire through better education
- Challenge and change public perceptions

The project involves a variety of activities around education and enforcement:

Participants

In St Neots the participants in CAPs are Huntingdonshire District Council, St Neots Town Council, Little Paxton Parish Council, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Drinksense⁵⁰, Longsands College, St Neots Community College, Retail of Alcohol Standards Group⁵¹ (RASG) and 20 local retailers. The local community has also been involved.

In Cambridge the participants are: Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, various different secondary schools, RASG, local retailers and the local community. Others, such as Drinksense, are likely to be involved in the future.

Drinksense is a registered charity providing advice, information, therapeutic counselling and a range of support services for people with alcohol-related problems and their carers and

⁴⁸ An extract of the implementation action plan is given in Case Study Evaluation Appendices - Appendix C.

⁴⁹ http://www.cambridgeshire.nhs.uk/documents/Board%20Meetings%20and%20Papers/20080903/3_3_-_Alcohol_Strategy_Sept_08_Board.pdf?preventCache=29%2F08%2F2008+11%3A32

⁵⁰ Drinksense: http://www.drinksense.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=25

⁵¹ RASG was set up in 2005 to seriously drive down underage sales. For the first time competitors in the high street agreed to work together, sharing best practice and common signage to deliver robust policies designed to curb what had up to then been unacceptably high levels of sales.
http://www.wsta.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=245&Itemid=28

families in Cambridgeshire. They work towards reducing the harm that alcohol may be causing a person whether that involves health, employment, relationships or lifestyle.

As Drinksense are able to provide a safe setting with trained professionals, many different kinds of people access the service. For some this may mean asking a few questions regarding alcohol units, for others it may mean meeting on a one-to-one basis to explore deeper-rooted issues affecting their behaviour. There is no charge for Drinksense's services.

Education

Education targets three audiences: retailers, young people and adults.

- Retailers receive 'Think 21' training including training packs and point of sale materials to support the Think 21 initiative. Training sessions are also arranged at large national supermarkets for all retailers in the CAP areas thus benefitting from the national companies' well-established training regimes.
- Young people are educated by partner agencies through schools and youth groups about the law relating to alcohol and the effects of alcohol on their health, behaviour and vulnerability. There may also be an element of education when engaging with young people during enforcement patrols.
- Adults are educated about the problems created by giving alcohol to under 18s and the offence of 'proxy purchasing' through leaflets distributed through retailers, letters issued by schools and parent alcohol awareness sessions run by Drinksense.

Enforcement

- Enforcement patrols by partner agencies deal with any young people attempting to buy alcohol, any adults buying alcohol for or on behalf of under 18s and any retail premises making underage sales.
- Trading Standards Officers work with store managers and position themselves in stores to advise on reasons why an attempted purchase has been refused.
- Alcohol is confiscated from under 18s in public places (and the Guardian Awareness Programme is used to inform parents about such instances).
- Any young people committing other offences whilst under the influence of alcohol are also dealt with and social services are informed where there is cause for concern.
- Retailers are provided with the telephone numbers of patrol agencies to report any underage attempted purchasers or proxy purchasers, so that they can promptly attend and deal with the alleged offenders. This has an added benefit to retailers, making them feel supported in their endeavour to restrict underage sales.

The importance of the local community seeing and feeling the positive affects of CAPs is well understood. Local media partners are regularly updated with news and they publish encouraging news stories to reassure the CAP communities and help reduce the fear of crime.

Training

Licensee/personal licence holders, premises licence holders and other retailers are provided with training in a variety of ways to help them understand the law relating to young people and alcohol and to avoid the commission of offences relating to underage alcohol consumption. For example, Think 21 training packs are provided to help stores train their staff and to provide information to the public through point of sale materials. Trading Standards also offer Think 21 training either in-store or at regional seminars. The Community Alcohol Partnerships have also facilitated the training of retailers (including independents) across the CAP areas at sessions facilitated by the large, national supermarkets. These sessions have included

watching supermarkets' training DVDs, touring their wine, beer and spirits aisles and checkouts, etc).

Young people are educated about the law relating to alcohol and young people, the effects of alcohol on health and behaviour and the consequences of committing crime through sessions at schools and youth clubs. To date these have focussed on secondary school age children. They are delivered by Police and Trading Standards although the CAPs are also currently looking to use theatre groups, peer to peer inputs, etc. Moreover, during the enforcement patrols, young people found with alcohol are given informal guidance by the partner agencies involved.

Through Drinksense, parents and other adults are also targeted for CAP education work, particularly as intelligence suggests that proxy and other parental supplies are a significant source of alcohol for under 18s. Schools support this by sending out letters to parents with proxy purchase leaflets. Parents are also invited to attend alcohol awareness workshops facilitated by Drinksense. A short, 30 second advertisement has been produced based on the messages in the proxy purchase leaflet and this is being shown in local shopping centres. Showings at parent's evenings at local schools are also currently being considered. The proxy purchase leaflet is also given to adults purchasing alcohol at a CAP retail partner. Finally, where a young person is found with alcohol in their possession, a Guardian Awareness Programme letter is issued with the proxy purchase leaflet.

Success measures and benefits

In St Neots, the Community Alcohol Partnership looked at police data relating to anti-social behaviour, litter counts in original hotspot areas, retailer surveys and some anecdotal evidence to determine the success of the project.

In terms of anti-social behaviour, a comparison of the period January to April 2008 with the corresponding period in 2007 shows there to be a reduction in incidents of 2% over the five wards of St Neots and of 45% in the hot-spot area of the skate-park.

Litter counts showed a consistent decrease in alcohol-related litter in the skate-park over the duration of the pilot period. In the first weekend of the pilot, 21 empty bottles and 86 empty cans of beer, cider and alcopops were found. In the last weekend this was down to 1 bottle and 8 cans. Between September 2007 and March 2008 there was a 90% reduction in alcohol-related litter.

Retailers were surveyed at the end of the pilot to gain their views on the initiative. Of the twelve that responded (60% response rate) the overwhelming majority were positive about the scheme although, in their view, it did little to impact on anti-social behaviour or alcohol thefts. The results of the evaluation are given below:

- All of the retailers had heard of the CAP; just over 40% claiming to know a lot about it.
- 92% of retailers agreed that their last contact with Trading Standards was helpful, with 83% stating that Trading Standards treated their business fairly.
- Two-thirds stated that they are now more aware of the effects of underage alcohol consumption and one-third claimed to be more aware of the law relating to young people and alcohol than they were prior to the pilot.
- The majority of retailers, 82%, believe that the same number of young people are trying to buy alcohol as six months ago.
- 82% of retailers have not seen any changes in instances of anti-social behaviour in St Neots, and 75% have not noticed any changes in alcohol theft in the last 6 months.

- All retailers found it useful to have telephone numbers for Police and Trading Standards in case of a need to report offenders in their premises, while 92% agreed that Trading Standards' offer to help in-store to identify possible offenders was useful.
- 92% found the information relating to alcohol and young people provided by Trading Standards useful. 73% agreed that they now have a better relationship with Trading Standards and 50% have a better relationship with the Police than they did before the Partnership.
- At least 75% of retailers were satisfied with the way the Police and Trading Standards are tackling underage drinking in St Neots. None were dissatisfied.

In terms of other benefits, anti-social behaviour issues were consistently featuring as a priority for residents at their local Neighbourhood Panel Meetings prior to the introduction of CAPs to St Neots. However, following the pilot, the panel meeting for St Neots and District Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) saw the community applaud the work of the CAP. Although at that time they wished anti-social behaviour to remain one of the priorities for the NPT, primarily to ensure that problems did not return, the most recent panel meeting has not seen it put forward as a priority, suggesting the community no longer views this issue as a concern.

At an end of pilot review meeting of the St Neots CAP there were many positive, anecdotal comments about the successes of the initiative. Police partners say they have noticed a difference in St Neots and receive fewer calls to the service than they did before the Partnership was launched. The local MP also commented that he now receives fewer letters of complaint relating to ASB in the main hotspot area⁵².

In Cambridge, the Community Alcohol Partnership intends to use all of the success measures used in St Neots, plus local residents' surveys, possibly young people surveys and some health related statistics such as ambulance pick-up data, to monitor the project's success.

At the launch event for the Cambridge CAP, a manager for a supermarket store in Cambridge who lives in St Neots said he wanted to be a part of the initiative in Cambridge as he had noticed the positive effects the CAP had had in his home town.

Key benefits of the project

1. Improved awareness amongst the community of the detrimental affect of alcohol on health, behaviour and vulnerability
2. Improved awareness amongst retailers of the impact of selling alcohol to young people and a greater understanding of related legislation
3. Improved awareness amongst adults of the legislation surrounding the purchase of alcohol for young people and the consequences of their actions
4. Reduced alcohol associated litter in previously identified hotspots in the CAPs area
5. Fewer complaints about anti-social behaviour
6. Improved working relationships with retailers
7. Improved working relationships between partner organisations
8. A feeling within the community that CAPs has made a difference

⁵² St Neots Town Crier 1 May 2008

Consultation

Prior to the implementation of the Community Alcohol Partnership, consultation was undertaken with the local police to identify the problem areas for underage drinking, thus ensuring resources were used where they were most needed.

Similarly, the CAPs consistently try to consult with the local community about the perceived problems in their area. This consultation is achieved through a variety of methods – regular reporting in local press and newsletters, radio, neighbourhood panel meetings and by surveying local residents. Throughout the lifetime of the CAPs, all partners and stakeholders are consulted about future activities and interventions through the CAP project team meetings and e-consultations.

At the close of the St Neots CAP pilot, all stakeholders were invited to a review meeting to give their view on the constitution, operation and effectiveness of the CAP and how it should be maintained.

Retail partners and a small number of residents in St Neots were surveyed about their experiences of being a part of the CAP (as discussed above) with significant positive responses.

For the Cambridge CAP there was wide consultation with the community and meetings with the Police to gain intelligence and determine in which wards the CAP would be launched. However, delays in completing the community consultation meant that the CAP was launched based primarily on the intelligence provided by the Police.

For future CAPs the intention is to liaise with Neighbourhood Liaison Officers who will engage with the public and undertake a survey of stakeholders prior to the launch of the partnership and again afterwards in order to measure effectiveness.

Cost

The costs of running a Community Alcohol Partnership are primarily attributed to the salary of the Project Manager. However, there are some other small costs associated with the design and print of marketing materials and the hosting of CAP events such as launch meetings and training sessions. However, in the main, CAP is cost-neutral as the key to its success is the alignment of partner resources and priorities.

Publicity

The outcomes of the St Neots CAP have been communicated to both the local community and to key players that can influence the introduction of CAPs in other areas. The local press has acted as media partners and reported good news stories within the St Neots and Cambridge localities (see press coverage below). Additionally, local newsletters such as Parish Council and resident action group newsletters have also been used. The Project Manager and partners at the Wine and Spirit Trade Association have been interviewed on local and national radio stations and St Neots Community Alcohol Partnership recently featured in the Guardian newspaper.

A roll-out model⁵³ or toolkit was produced as part of the St Neots pilot and this is available on the Cambridgeshire County Council and the LACORS websites. Moreover, the Department for Children, Schools and Families produced an Every Child Matters case study of the St Neots pilot⁵⁴ with key tips, challenges, etc.

⁵³ <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/4DD5CC35-248A-4E48-AC6D-897FBCF446FB/0/RolloutModelfinal.pdf>

⁵⁴ <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/files/5D2B8FC3E523543270CF2BB60C3FC373.pdf>

Other local authorities, constabularies and agencies wishing to receive more information about the working of the CAPs are invited to meet those involved and see how it works on the ground. To date visitors have been hosted from North Yorkshire Trading Standards, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Reading Trading Standards and the Better Regulation Executive.

Obstacles, barriers and learning

One of the main barriers to the success of the project was the deep-set, long-established attitudes of the public services involved. For example, the Police are most familiar with, and thus expectant of, the enforcement approach. 'Traditional' partnership work in the form of test purchasing operations has perhaps contributed to this and thus the Police may expect to test purchase routinely, and also have an element of hoping to fine/prosecute premises. Community Alcohol Partnerships take a different approach and hope for different outcomes altogether. By explaining the effects (or lack of) of traditional approaches on the problems associated with underage drinking, and by using intelligence such as the findings of Cambridgeshire's biennial young people's health behaviour questionnaire (Balding Survey) and the results seen in the St Neots CAP area, attitudes can be changed. If buy-in is sought from the top, this makes the work on the ground much easier.

Similarly, the differing agendas of each of the partners involved could have been a barrier to the success of the project. However, by identifying and promoting the benefits the Partnership could bring to each of the partners, full participation was gained.

One of the barriers for the Cambridge CAP has been the success of the St Neots CAP. This success has generated interest in the CAP from many local authorities and other public services. This has resulted in a high number of calls, e-mails and visits, diverting resources that could have been used in the execution of the Cambridge CAP.

In respect of other learning, marketing materials necessary to promote any new Community Alcohol Partnership (such as leaflets, posters etc) would be designed and printed before its commencement (creating a separate project in itself).

Development of an on-line hub for all CAP information would also be useful from the outset of the project. This facility would provide key information to anybody wishing to implement a CAP in their area, for example, the roll-out model, artwork for marketing materials, letters for retailers, etc. This would have saved project staff time in providing this.

Licensee survey for Cambridgeshire

Background to the business survey

A short telephone survey was undertaken amongst licensees⁵⁵ in the Cambridge City and St Neots areas during February 2009 to establish the extent of their awareness of the tools and initiatives being implemented by their local enforcement authorities to prevent underage sales of alcohol and alcohol-related crime and disorder, their effectiveness, usage and participation in the initiatives and those that might help them avoid sales to persons under the age of 18 in the future. It also explored issues around enforcement, whether they had been found to sell to young people, and actions that might be taken against them if they were to offend in the future.

In total 20⁵⁶ licensed premises were interviewed, all selling alcohol for consumption off premises. 11 are in Cambridge City and 9 in St Neots. 11 businesses are independents whilst 9 are part of a chain or franchise.

Awareness of, and participation in, Community Alcohol Partnership (CAPs) scheme

All 20 licensees are aware of the Community Alcohol Partnership scheme in their local area. Of these, 90% are participating in a CAPs scheme; 91% in Cambridge City and 89% in St Neots.

Reasons given for participating in the scheme are principally that Trading Standards asked them to do so and that it seemed the right thing to do to ensure continued good practise and compliance with legislation. The two licensees who are not participating in the scheme feel that it has limited relevance to them as their sales of alcohol account for a very small proportion of their total income and their store opening times do not extend into the evenings.

Existence of problems in the area

Young people attempting to buy alcohol and incidence of anti-social behaviour are said to have been particular problems in the local area, prompting the introduction of the Community Alcohol Partnerships.

Thinking back over the past two years, which of the following problems existed in your local area resulting in the introduction of Community Alcohol Partnerships?	
Young people trying to buy alcohol	65%
Incidence of anti-social behaviour generally amongst young people	59%
Young people congregating around alcohol licensed premises	53%
Street drinking by young people	53%
Incidence of public disorder	47%
Customers or members of the public being intimidated by young people	47%
Incidents of adults buying alcohol for young people	47%
Intimidation and threats to staff	47%
Levels of alcohol-related litter (i.e. cans, bottles)	47%
Number of complaints received around anti-social behaviour	41%
Don't know	6%

Base: 17

⁵⁵ The sample database from which licensees were drawn was provided by the local authority.

⁵⁶ Care should be exercised when interpreting data in this report due to the small sample size.

The most common problems experienced by licensees are verbal abuse of staff and theft of alcohol by young people.

Which of the following has your business experienced?	
Verbal abuse of staff	67%
Theft of alcohol by young people	61%
Threats/intimidation of staff	44%
Violence towards staff	6%
Threats/intimidation of customers	6%
None of these	17%

Base: 18

Licensees' awareness of initiatives in Cambridgeshire

It is posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials that inform staff of the issues around underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder that score highest in licensee awareness.

Following this are the Think 21 and Think 25 campaigns with 85% of licensees aware of one of these; 80% are specifically aware of the Think 21 campaign and 35% Think 25.

Which of the following initiatives and tools do you think are being used by your local Community Alcohol Partnership to help licensed premises address underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?	
Posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials that inform staff	95%
Think 21/Think 25	85%
Support with the identification of fake IDs	80%
Enforcement through test purchasing	75%
Enforcement patrols	75%
The contact telephone number of enforcement officers who can attend the store	70%
Confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places	70%
Guidance on alcohol advertising in licensed premises	65%
Training courses	60%
High visibility policing to discourage crime and disorder	60%
Enforcement officers working in-store to support staff who refuse sales	45%
Expansion of CCTV schemes	45%
Appearance before local authority licensing committee for review of premises' licence	30%

20

The least well known measures and initiatives are enforcement officers working in-store (which the Partnership is somewhat concerned about since all retailers should have received a letter offering this service), the expansion of CCTV schemes (which is understandable since this initiative has not been proactively promoted) and the licence review process (which again is understandable since there has been little test purchasing and where it has no underage sales have been detected).

Effectiveness of initiatives

Each of the initiatives are considered effective in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder by at least seven in ten licensees that area aware of them. The only exception is the expansion of CCTV schemes where 55% say these are effective.

All licensees aware of the Think 21/25 campaigns believe they are effective.

How effective would you say [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?							
	Think 21/25	Enforcement patrols	High visibility policing	Enforcement officers working in-store	Posters, leaflets, DVDs, etc	Appearance before licensing committee for review	Training courses
Very effective	88%	20%	33%	67%	72%	33%	64%
Fairly effective	12%	73%	59%	22%	11%	50%	18%
Not very effective	-	-	8%	-	6%	-	9%
Not at all effective	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know	-	7%	-	11%	11%	17%	9%
Base (those aware) :	17	15	12	9	18	6	11

How effective would you say [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?						
	Support with identifying fake IDs	Confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places	Enforcement through test purchasing	Guidance on alcohol advertising	Telephone number for enforcement officers	Expansion of CCTV scheme
Very effective	63%	50%	36%	46%	57%	33%
Fairly effective	19%	29%	43%	31%	14%	22%
Not very effective	6%	7%	-	8%	-	33%
Not at all effective	-	-	-	-	-	11%
Don't know	12%	14%	21%	15%	29%	-
Base (those aware) :	16	14	14	13	14	9

Local authority and police initiatives used or participated in

The Think 21/25 campaigns have achieved the highest levels of participation of all the initiatives, with all licensees claiming to have participated in one of them.

Which of the following Community Alcohol Partnership initiatives and tools have you used or participated in?	
Think 21/Think 25	100%
Posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials that inform staff	88%
Support with the identification of fake IDs	88%
The contact telephone number of enforcement officers who can attend the store	53%
Receiving guidance on alcohol advertising in your premises	53%
Expansion of CCTV	29%
Training courses	24%
Enforcement officers working in store to support staff who refuse sales	24%
Appearing before local authority licensing committee for review of premises' licence	12%
None of these	-

Base: 17

Less than three in ten licensees have used or participated in the expansion of CCTV schemes, training courses, having enforcement officers working in-store or a licence review.

Head office related support

All of those who are part of a chain or franchise receive support from their head office; usually this is training and information materials that deal with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder.

Informed of progress and successes of CAP initiatives and support offered

Licensees feel that they are well informed and well supported by CAPs on the progress and successes of the initiatives.

How well informed do you feel about the progress and successes of Community Alcohol Partnerships?			
How well do you feel the Community Alcohol Partnership supports you when dealing with issues around underage sales of alcohol and crime and disorder?			
Very well informed	44%	Very well supported	50%
Fairly well informed	50%	Fairly well supported	44%
Neither	-	Neither	-
Fairly ill-informed	6%	Fairly poorly supported	-
Very ill-informed	-	Very poorly supported	-
Don't know	-	Don't know/Can't say	6%

Base: 18

Base: 18

However when asked how the partnership could help support businesses better, licensees suggest the need for greater publicity and media coverage of the initiative as well as providing more frequent updates.

Providing additional police patrols, ensuring community and parental involvement and maintaining publicity are all seen as additional actions that the Community Alcohol Partnership could take to tackle issue around access to alcohol and crime and disorder in the community.

Initiatives that can assist businesses in the future

Having the contact telephone number of enforcement officers (who can attend premises when an underage purchase is attempted), guidance on how to identify fake IDs and additional promotional materials informing customers about underage sales could all help licensees in the future.

Which of the following could help your business avoid selling alcohol in the future to persons under the age of 18?	
Having a contact telephone number of enforcement officers	83%
Guidance on how to identify fake IDs	83%
More promotional material informing customers about underage sales	83%
Better understanding of legislation	61%
Guidance on refusing sales to young people	61%
Enforcement officers in premises to help staff when young people try to buy	61%
None of these	-

Base: 18

Besides CAPs engaging enforcement patrols to look out for adults buying alcohol for young people, few licensees are aware of any other measures employed by the local authority or police to deal with this problem. Looking at how they combat this issue, licensees claim that vigilance is the best method. Those who suspect that a proxy sale may occur claim to challenge and refuse such attempts. Others have leaflets that remind adults of the law.

Education and publicity of the issues, highlighting that proxy sales are illegal and fining adults who offend are seen as further actions that could be taken to help prevent adults from buying alcohol for young people.

Action(s) that would be taken if found to be selling alcohol to under 18's

A licensing review is the answer given most commonly by licensees when asked the likely actions that would be taken against them, followed by a fixed penalty notice, if found to be selling alcohol to underage young people.

What do you think could happen to your business if you were found to sell alcohol to a person under the age of 18?⁵⁷	
Licensing review	56%
Fixed penalty notice	44%
Court appearance	17%
Asked to attend an Age Related Products training course	17%
Informal caution	-
Formal caution	-
No action taken	-
Don't know	6%

Base: 18

When asked to select the ONE action most likely to be taken from a given list, a third of licensees feel they would receive a fixed penalty notice; 28% believe they would face a licensing review.

Which ONE of the following do you think would be most likely to happen to your business if you were found to sell alcohol to a person under the age of 18?	
Fixed penalty notice	33%
Licensing review	28%
Asked to attend an Age Related Products training course	17%
Court appearance	17%
Informal caution	-
Formal caution	-
No action taken	-
Don't know	6%

Base: 18

Views on Age Restricted Products training courses

It was explained to licensees that some local authorities offer attendance at an Age Restricted Products training course to those found to have sold alcohol to under 18's as an alternative to having formal action taken against them. The charge for the course would be similar to the cost of a fixed penalty notice.

When asked their views, all licensees feel this approach could be effective locally in discouraging businesses from selling alcohol to persons under the age of 18.

Measures in premises

78% of licensees have CCTV on their premises, 67% use a sales refusal book and 67% have till prompts to help them combat the sale of alcohol to those under 18 and alcohol-related crime and disorder. Just 6% claim to have none of these measures in operation on their premises.

⁵⁷ Spontaneous answers

Summary evaluation for Cambridgeshire

The Community Alcohol Partnership (CAPs) has been introduced into two discrete areas of Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City and St Neots. It relies on the “buy-in” to the principle by local people, local businesses and the regulatory agencies working together to tackle alcohol-related problems. The Trading Standards team in particular has prompted many of the participants to get involved.

It is perhaps of little surprise that all 20 licensees surveyed are aware of the partnership, although two premises have declined to take part in the initiative as they felt it was not relevant due to the nature of their business and their opening hours.

It is very encouraging that nine in ten licensees feel well supported in dealing with issues around underage sales of alcohol and crime and disorder in addition to feeling well informed about the progress and successes of the CAPs.

The posters, DVD's and other training materials and the Think 21/25 campaigns are the most widely recognised of the initiatives being run in the CAPs areas and these are also seen as the most effective, closely followed by enforcement officer patrols and high visibility policing.

If an underage sale should be identified through test purchasing, licensees feel they would probably be required to attend a licensing review or issued with a fixed penalty notice. This suggests that licensees believe the local enforcement agencies would use the local licensing review process and fines in preference to formal action through the courts, again highlighting a level of local business support.

Whilst the Cambridgeshire CAP projects use a number of indicators to measure success, test purchasing has yet to be undertaken and measured. Instead they have relied upon police data of reported incidents of anti-social behaviour. This saw an overall reduction of 2% across St Neots, with a 45% reduction in the hotspot area of the skate park. An evaluation of the amount of alcohol-related litter found in the skate park has seen a reduction of 90%.

Licensing Evaluation Study of Aberystwyth

Aberystwyth's multi-agency approach to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder

Project overview

Aberystwyth is the principal town of the west coast of Wales, having a population of 20,000. It is a university town and an important local employer; the University of Wales Aberystwyth employs around 2000 staff and provides an educational platform for 8,000 students.

With 79 on-licence premises and 22 off-licences in the town, there had been a growing perception that the streets at night were becoming unsafe places to be with high levels of drunkenness, litter and noise.

In early 2008 a project was devised to identify the problems associated with the night time economy in Aberystwyth and put in place plans designed to bring about improvements. This resulted in the secondment from the local authority's Environmental Services Department of a Night Time Economy (NTE) Co-ordinator.

Although in its infancy, this project has seen improvements in the level of communication, understanding and partnership working between the key stakeholders in the town; the local authority, Town Council, students, police, licensees, residents, church representatives and taxi companies. For example, the police and local authority enforcement officers have been undertaking joint patrols and carrying out joint visits to businesses. These have given them a greater appreciation of each others' functions and enabled them to improve their effectiveness on interventions.

The benefits of partnership working have also been recognised by the University of Aberystwyth in achieving a good 'Town and Gown' relationship. Since the beginning of this project there have been more open discussions with the Students Union and also University representatives, and it is hoped that through these each party will further its understanding of the needs and preoccupations of others rather than simply rely on goodwill.

National and local objectives

Ceredigion County Council is monitored annually against national objectives through the Wales Programme for Improvement. The Welsh Assembly Government monitors the performance through national indicators. The Ceredigion County Council Improvement Plan 2008/09⁵⁸ outlines the objectives for the year ahead and how they will be achieved. It also sets out performance targets for each of the national strategic indicators.

The Improvement Plan forms one part of the performance management framework. Other parts include the Community Strategy – Ceredigion 2020 and the Corporate Strategy.

Local strategies and plans

The vision for Ceredigion, expressed through the Community Strategy, is "Ceredigion in 2020 will be a self confident, healthy, caring, bilingual community, supported by a strong local economy using the skills of its people, making wide use of the resources of its high quality environment, providing opportunities for all to reach their full potential."

⁵⁸ Ceredigion Improvement Plan 08-09
http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/utilities/action/act_download.cfm?mediaid=12948

The Ceredigion Improvement Plan 2008-2009 is supported by the Ceredigion Community Safety Plan 2008-2011⁵⁹ and the Ceredigion Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy 2008-11. These multi-agency strategies focus on the reduction of harm, perceived and actual, arising from the irresponsible consumption of alcohol in the evening and late night economy, and the improvement of population health and wellbeing. Their activities are concerned with:

- Engaging with licensees
- Education for young people and their families focusing on early intervention/prevention.
- Encouragement of the use of proof of age cards and schemes
- Support for substance mis-users, previous offenders and their families
- Improved data collection and analysis to assist with identifying problem areas
- Promotion of Crime Stoppers 0800 555 111.

Night Time Economy project objectives

If Aberystwyth town centre is to be a vibrant, prosperous and welcoming environment for everyone to visit and enjoy, then a collaborative approach is required to address the effects of irresponsible behaviour and the current drinking culture. The overall aims for introducing a night time economy action plan are:

- To effectively manage the late night economy in Aberystwyth
- To reduce harm arising from the irresponsible consumption of alcohol
- To improve the quality of life of residents and enhance the experiences of people resorting to the town.

Delivery of the project

With funding from the Welsh Assembly Government the project is managed by the Community Safety Partnership and runs for 12 months from April 2008. The project team meets every 6 weeks and comprises a Night Time Economy Co-ordinator and representatives from Aberystwyth Town Council, Ceredigion County Council including officers from Licensing, Environmental Health Services, the Highways Department and Youth Services, Dyfed Powys Police; Aberystwyth University, Aberystwyth Guild of Students, Communities First, Licensed Victuallers Association, Aberystwyth MasterPlan (Welsh Assembly Government), Menter Aberystwyth and Bronglais Hospital.

The Co-ordinator monitors the attendance levels and keeps in touch with all partnership members. This has the effect of keeping the project team motivated and focussed.

A stakeholder event was held in May 2008 with the aim of identifying the current problems with the night time economy in Aberystwyth and looking for solutions. Over 70 delegates attended with representatives of the Police, the Town and County Councils, the Guild of Students, the University of Wales, local school sixth forms, the Arts Centre, Community Safety Partnership, local residents, the taxi association, four national supermarkets, representatives from two breweries, Pubwatch and the Licensed Victuallers Association, (LVA).

Prior to this event there was a perception amongst locals that the streets of Aberystwyth were No-Go areas at night with high levels of crime and violence. The Police reported that the crime statistics did not support this perception and for the period April to June 2008 total crime was down by 25% with offences for criminal damage and anti-social behaviour (ASB) down by

⁵⁹ Community Safety Plan http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/utilities/action/act_download.cfm?mediaid=11296

1.5%. This is set against an increase in criminal damage and ASB for other parts of the force area.

The stakeholder event gave everyone who participated the opportunity to voice their concerns about Aberystwyth at night, suggest solutions and receive reassurances that their opinions would be heeded. More significantly it also opened a dialogue between the different bodies, organisations and businesses that are involved in the economy of Aberystwyth town and helped to dispel some of the myths and misconceptions that existed. For example, participants agreed that no one group within the community is solely responsible for the town's problems and that everyone can play a part, working together to tackle the problems and improve perceptions.

The stakeholder event identified seven priority areas:

1. To reduce alcohol-related crime and disorder in Aberystwyth
2. To address environmental related matters associated with the night time economy
3. To improve accessibility to transport
4. To address the negative public perception of Aberystwyth
5. To provide a greater range of leisure activities
6. To promote a sensible/safe drinking culture
7. To collate data and share information

Each of these priority areas were worked into the Aberystwyth Night Time Economy Action Plan and this was launched in October 2008. A copy of the action plan can be found in Case Study Evaluation Appendices - Appendix D1.⁶⁰

Through this work with stakeholders the Community Safety Partnership has developed very good relationships with the University of Wales and the Guild of Students. Access to the University Press Officers has enabled the partnership to get key messages out to students in a quick and effective way. For example, the "Sssh" campaign (as described below) saw each student at the university receive an email containing details of the scheme and asking for their cooperation.

Street Noise complaints to the Environmental Health Department are continuing to decrease. The last complaint was in November 2008. It was noticeable that after an Aberystwyth University pub crawl organised by a Cardiff based firm in October 2008, no noise complaints were received either by the Environmental Health Department or by Dyfed Powys Police. This event involved 1,000 students visiting 5 different venues in the town during the course of one evening. As a result of partnership working there had been a pre-event discussion between Dyfed Powys Police, the Night Time Economy Project Coordinator, Aberystwyth University, Licensing Officers, elected members and Licensees. A coordinated approach was agreed and there were representatives from each of the partners present during the evening along with an increased police presence.

Some initiatives were originally introduced to tackle problems and were in effect standalone actions, but are now pulled together to form a cohesive approach to tackling the problems in the town at night. Some of the actions identified within the action plan are:

- **Aberystwyth Alcohol Free Zone.** Using the provisions of a Designated Public Place Order, Police Officers have been able to confiscate alcohol from those found drinking alcohol in the street or in possession of alcohol in the street.

⁶⁰ NTE Action Plan http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/utilities/action/act_download.cfm?mediaid=12375

- **Behave or Be Banned.** Individual Pubwatch schemes within the county contain Behave or be Banned schemes, commonly referred to as BOBB. There are several sanctions available to BOBB Committees, when referrals are received, which range from letters of warning to bans from licensed premises within the scheme. Periods of bans are decided by individual BOBB Committees not the Police and are dependant on the seriousness of the referral. 'Offenders' can be banned for 1 week to life; the life ban is normally invoked when serious violence is used. There is an automatic three year ban if violence against a member of staff is involved.
- **Pubwatch.** This is a regular meeting of pub licensees. If there are recurring problems relating to banned persons being allowed entry to premises which are not part of the Pubwatch scheme then a condition can be added to the premises licence to require membership of Pubwatch.
- **Advance warnings of exceptional events.** Licensees are encouraged to notify the police when events are planned which may be considered exceptional in order that the appropriate Police support can be offered.
- **Wired in.**⁶¹ This is an 8 week programme designed to empower people who have alcohol-related problems. Clients are required to undertake a treatment programme as part of the arrest referral scheme.
- **Best Bar None Scheme.** By adopting the nationally recognised accreditation scheme for on-licensed premises and promoted by the British Institute of Inn Keeping, the main aims are to reduce alcohol-related crime and disorder, reward responsible operators, and to share good practice with others. To date 10 premises have applied and will be assessed in early 2009.
- **Night Light Scheme.** The partnership has liaised with local religious establishments and has set up a voluntary pastoral service, similar to the national scheme of Street Pastors. Trained volunteers go out on Saturday nights and any other busy nights between 23.00 and 03.00 hours and offer help to those in need. The volunteers receive training in basic first aid, conflict resolution, drugs awareness and basic health and safety. They wear jackets that enable revellers to recognise them, have flasks of hot tea or coffee, hand out flip-flops to those who have lost shoes and help others into taxis. There are over 50 volunteers in this scheme, but usually 12 are on duty at any one time.
- **Spikeys.** The distribution of anti-spike bottle tops to licensed premises: for drinkers to use to prevent their drinks being spiked.
- **Store Net radio network.** Local pubs and retail outlets are part of the local radio network which is connected to the Police. More recently the Night Light volunteers have been issued with radios to enable them to be called to those who need their help.
- **"Sshhh" campaign.** The campaign was introduced as a result of one the main concerns expressed by people at the stakeholders event i.e. noise in the Aberystwyth streets late at night. It is aimed at all who, while not breaking any law, may be contributing to the overall disturbance on the streets as they make their way between licensed premises, going to catch a taxi, or walking back home through the narrow side streets of the town. Before Christmas 2008, posters and letters were distributed to larger businesses in Aberystwyth including banks and Council offices. These were to be displayed on notice boards to remind employees going out for Christmas parties to be aware of the noise and disturbance they may be causing to residents in the town. Also

⁶¹ Wired in: <http://wiredin.org.uk/>

posters have been distributed to letting agents for display on notice boards in houses of multiple occupation. Emails were sent to council employees and to University students via the university press office both at the end of the Christmas term and also at the end of college exams in January. Posters are displayed in the students union and in shop windows in the town, (see Case Study Evaluation Appendices - Appendix D3).

- **Improved toilet facilities.** Exploration as to how more toilets can be made available at night to reduce incidents of street urination.
- **Cab safe scheme.** This is a scheme which provides members of the public with a mobile telephone text service, allowing callers to receive telephone numbers of licensed taxi operators direct to their mobile phone. When a text request is made, their mobile phone signal automatically identifies their location and provide them with the telephone number of the three nearest licensed taxi operators. The benefits are that it seeks to protect visitors to the town and encourages the use of local taxi operators.
- **Media.** To use the media to promote the work of the Community Safety Partnership and the Night Time Economy Project.
- **Alcohol Harm reduction interventions.** BIIAB Alcohol Awareness course with Coleg Ceredigion, and talks with licensed trade.

Success measures

The following performance measures are set out in the Ceredigion Community Safety Plan 2008-11 for the late night economy project:

1. A reduction in the overall levels of crime and disorder associated with the late night economy in Aberystwyth.
2. A reduction in alcohol-related admissions to the A&E unit at Bronglais Hospital
3. A reduction in the noise profile late at night.
4. A reduction in the overall levels of complaints received in relation to the late night economy in Aberystwyth.
5. Use interviews to measure perception and gain feedback from stakeholders to ascertain whether there has been a reduction in crime and fear of crime and an improvement in the quality of life of local residents.

A second stakeholders' event has been arranged for 27th March 2009. This will be an opportunity for those who have been driving the various initiatives to feed back to the stakeholders and also for the project coordinator to gain feedback about the delivery of the aims and objectives. Whilst some on-going monitoring has been in place, it will also be an opportunity to measure the overall success of the project.

Mad Friday

The Friday before Christmas is known locally as "Mad Friday", as many revellers go out and drink to excess. For 2008, a multi agency approach was taken to mitigate any problems that might occur.

The town was busier than on the same occasion in 2007. At about 23.00 hours it was becoming evident that tension was growing at the top of the town where there was a large concentration of revellers. To help dissipate it, officers from the neighbourhood policing team, the NTE project coordinator and volunteers from the Night Light scheme handed out bottles of water and lollipops to passers by. The approach was successful and the Police advise that tensions were quickly diffused and arrests for the night were down.

Community Pride initiative

Some of the work involved in the community pride initiative overlaps with the NTE project and where possible a united approach is adopted. In December joint visits were undertaken to businesses to disseminate information about litter and street noise leading up to the festive period. Also an alleyway survey was undertaken by the NTE Coordinator and the Civic Pride Coordinator to discover potential trouble spots which could be tackled as part of either project. With regard to late night food premises in Aberystwyth, a dual approach is being used to identify problems relating to litter and street cleansing outside businesses and to encourage effective solutions. In relation to Aberystwyth University, joint meetings have been held with the Guild of Students to discuss matters relating to community and civic responsibility and to introduce campaigns aimed at reducing the incidence of littering and noise.

Validate Proof of Age cards

With funding from the Ceredigion Community Safety Partnership, the Validate Proof of Age Card with PASS hologram has been made available across the county. Since April 2007 the focus has been on encouraging pupils in year 9 (13/14 year olds) of the local secondary schools to obtain a proof of age card. Of the seven secondary schools in Ceredigion, three have actively promoted the use of the card and in 2007/08 over 800 Validate Proof of Age cards were issued to pupils aged between 12 and 15 years of age. For 2008, students from the college of further education (Coleg Ceredigion) were invited to apply for a card. They are aged between 16 and 18 years and attend the college on two sites, one in Aberystwyth and one in Cardigan. To date for 2008/09, a total of 300 cards have been issued to college students and secondary school students.

As an incentive to apply for a card, two local sports shops have agreed to offer card holders a 10% discount on production of the Validate card. More widely, a Validate cardholder may have a free driving lesson from the AA when two lessons are purchased and the Youth Hostel Association offers a discount on fees for membership and accommodation and on goods purchased from its shops. In Bridgend, in South Wales, the First Cymru bus company are trialling a scheme to offer a discount on fares to 16 to 18 years olds holding a Validate card. Discussions are taking place with a view to extending this to the county of Ceredigion.

The funding from the Community Safety Partnership in Ceredigion has enabled the cards to be issued free of charge to pupils and students. The cost to the Partnership is equivalent to £2.50 per card. Cards issued outside this scheme to an individual young person would cost £10.

The application process is completed at the school or college by the Alcohol Harm Reduction Officer, assisted by school administrative staff who are able to verify a pupils date of birth. Pupils who declare an incorrect date of birth are advised to correct the mistake or go without a card. The application form and a photograph are sent to Validate, who produce the proof of age card.

Whilst there are problems finding the right person in a school to champion the cause and allocate time for pupils to apply for a card, in general all the schools are in agreement that the cards are a good idea.

The Business Development Unit at Coleg Ceredigion in Aberystwyth offers courses for Door Supervisors who wish to be registered with the Security Industry Authority, (SIA), and those who wish to apply for a personal licence under the Licensing Act 2003. The Alcohol Harm Reduction Officer has an input to this training and encourages door and bar staff to ask for the proof of age card and to ensure it contains the PASS hologram. They are offered advice on how to spot "novelty" and fake proof of age cards. This is designed to instil some confidence into the trade as some outlets still insist that young people produce a photo driving licence or a passport. These two documents each have a street value to criminals which in itself puts the

carrier at risk of theft or being mugged. The consequences of a loss of proof age card are minimal, and it is far safer for the young person to carry one around. The message, "Say no to underage sales" has been delivered to all the licensed premises in Aberystwyth by way of posters and a booklet. It is repeated at local Pubwatch meetings and as part of visits to individual premises to promote the Best Bar None Award.

Crime statistics

According to the 2005/06 British Crime Survey, victims believed the offender to be under the influence of alcohol in 44% of all violent incidents.

The Action Plan for the Night Time Economy project was launched in October 2008. A comparison of reported crimes for anti-social behaviour in Aberystwyth for the 4 months October 2008 to January 2009 with the same period the year before, shows there to be an increase of 8%. However, the Police advise that the way in which the figures for anti-social behaviour are now recorded may account for the increase in 2008. Also they claim to have policed the town more effectively than in the previous year and that this has driven up some figures such as public order arrests. They are of the opinion that crime in Aberystwyth Town as a whole has decreased. The crime data and comparisons can be found in Case Study Evaluation Appendices - Appendix D2.

Underage sales compliance rates

Since April 2008 the Police have conducted two underage sales exercises as part of the Home Office Tackling Underage Sales of Alcohol Campaign (TUSAC). The results show a large improvement in the compliance rate which may be attributed, at least in part, to licensees' raised awareness of the NTE project. Also all premises were advised by the Neighbourhood Policing Teams that they had been subjected to a compliance check, claiming that it is important for those who are complaint as well as those non-compliant to be aware of the exercises.

Date	Attempted purchases	Sales	Non-compliance	Compliance
11/04/2008	9	5	55.6%	44.4%
12/12/2008	15	6	40.0%	60.0%
Total	24	11	45.8%	54.2%

Further under-age test purchasing is planned before the end of the financial year.

Test purchasing is the established method of measuring compliance with age restricted legislation, although it is accepted that many factors can affect whether a sale takes place, including the appearance of the purchaser, the confidence of the sales assistant to ask for ID and to refuse a sale, the ability of the sales assistant to calculate the purchaser's age from their date of birth, and the presence of other sales assistants or customers.

Other benefits

Other benefits from this initiative have been:

- Improved profile with elected members, the Police, and businesses
- Improved motivation of officers
- Increased intelligence from businesses and the public, resulting in activities being targeted more effectively
- Development of partnerships with certain businesses which has helped broaden relationships beyond just age restricted product compliance

- Licensed premises in particular now seem to perceive themselves as part of the solution rather than part of the problem.
- Representatives from both the Guild of Students and the staff of Aberystwyth University feel included in and committed to the process.
- There is greater communication between council departments and even between different sections of the same department.

It is important to emphasise that these 'other benefits' or qualitative outcomes are felt to often contribute significantly to an improvement in the NTE in terms of the 'wellbeing' of the area, although they are difficult to measure. It is argued that they could also contribute to long term outcomes in improving the NTE.

Cost and funding

For the financial year 2008/2009 a grant was obtained from the Welsh Assembly Government for £40,000 and the Community Safety Partnership contributed £1,000. The latter was received as a good practice award from the Regional Partnership Performance Improvement Fund for the ongoing development of the reduction of alcohol-related violence and anti-social behaviour within Aberystwyth Town Centre.

In addition to the direct funding, there has been the added value contribution from Ceredigion County Council's officers. They have been integral to the development and delivery of the project and the action plan. They include officers from the Health and Wellbeing Team of Environmental Services Department, the support and expertise of the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy Manager, Environmental Health Officer (Health Improvement) and the Health Awareness Officer (Alcohol Harm Reduction). In addition to the work of the project coordinator, the financial value of their involvement is thought to far exceed the dedicated project funding of £41,000.

As yet there is no funding for the post of Night Time Economy Co-ordinator for the next financial year, although various funding streams are being explored. Some of the initiatives can be built into main stream budgets, although one of the important aspects of this project has been having a coordinator to instigate dialogue and to ensure that partners stay on board. There are many groups, organisations and official bodies working for the benefit of the town but by linking them and encouraging partnership working their individual efforts become a force which can bring about change and improvement.

Obstacles and barriers

There have been no identified obstacles or barriers to getting this project off the ground. The project team was assembled straightaway and there was clear evidence of an enthusiasm and willingness to work together. Meetings were arranged with all the key players in the Aberystwyth area and the overwhelming feedback from these was that groups were pleased to have been consulted and were keen to play their part. It has however proved a continuing challenge to maintain a continued commitment from all partners – some have been definitely more committed than others.

However lack of funding to expedite resolution of some of the problem issues identified by stakeholders that would need capital investment, e.g. improvement in toilets, could be seen as a significant obstacle.

Licensee survey for Aberystwyth

Background to the business survey

A short telephone survey was undertaken amongst licensees in Aberystwyth during February 2009 to establish the extent of their awareness of the tools and initiatives being implemented by their local enforcement authorities to prevent underage sales of alcohol and alcohol-related crime and disorder, their effectiveness, usage and participation in the initiatives and those that might help them avoid sales to persons under the age of 18 in the future. It also explored issues around enforcement, whether they had been found to sell to young people, and actions that might be taken against them if they were to offend in the future.

The number of licensees that took part in the survey is relatively small⁶², 33 in all. 17 sell alcohol for consumption on premises, 10 for consumption off premises and 6 for consumption both on and off premises. 23 are independents whilst 10 are part of a chain or franchise. The sample database from which licensees were drawn was sourced from the local authority and Yell.com.

Existence of problems in the area in the last 2 years

The number of complaints received about night time noise is felt to have been a particular problem in the Aberystwyth area, mentioned by 73% of licensees. The incidence of public disorder and young people attempting to buy alcohol are both viewed as having been a problem by 67% of licensees.

Thinking back over the past two years, which of the following problems existed in your local area resulting in your local authority and the police developing initiatives to deal with them?	
Number of complaints received around night time noise	73%
Incidence of public disorder	67%
Young people trying to buy alcohol	67%
Number of complaints received around anti-social behaviour	64%
Levels of alcohol-related litter (i.e. cans, bottles)	55%
Incidence of anti-social behaviour generally amongst young people	55%
Young people congregating around alcohol licensed premises	45%
Street drinking by young people	45%
Customers or members of the public being intimidated by young people	42%
Incidents of adults buying alcohol for young people	33%
Intimidation and threats to staff	21%
None of these	9%
Don't know	9%

Base: 33

⁶² Care should be exercised when interpreting data in this report due to the small sample size.

47% of licensees have experienced verbal abuse of staff and 31% threats and intimidation of staff.

Which of the following has your business experienced?	
Verbal abuse of staff	47%
Threats/intimidation of staff	31%
Threats/intimidation of customers	28%
Theft of alcohol by young people	19%
Violence towards staff	16%
None of these	47%
Don't know	-

Base: 32

Licensees awareness of initiatives run in Aberystwyth

Of all the initiatives being run in Aberystwyth, the Behave or Be Banned campaign achieves the highest level of awareness (from on-premises licensees). 91% claim to be aware of this scheme.

This is followed by high visibility policing, enforcement through test purchasing, the expansion of CCTV, the confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places and the use of posters, leaflets, DVDs and other staff information materials; roughly three-quarters of licensees are aware of these initiatives.

Which of the following initiatives and tools do you think are being used by your local authority and the police to help licensed premises address underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?	
Behave or be Banned*	91%
High visibility policing to discourage crime and disorder	79%
Enforcement through test purchasing, measuring compliance of licensed premises	76%
Expansion of CCTV (plus radio links and Pubwatch for on-sales premises)	76%
Confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places	76%
Posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials that inform staff	73%
Think 21/Challenge 21	70%
Appearance before local authority licensing committee for review of premises' licence	61%
Guidance on alcohol advertising in licensed premises	48%
Support with the identification of fake IDs	48%
Best Bar None*	48%
Cab Safe scheme*	48%
Training courses	45%
Night Light scheme, pastoral volunteers providing assistance between 11pm & 3am	36%
'Sshhh' campaign	30%
Distribution of anti-spike bottle tops to licensed premises*	30%
Wired In, 8 week help programme for people with alcohol-related problems	-
None of these	-
Don't know	-

* Asked to on-sales premises only; sample size 23

Base: 33

Fewer than a third are aware of the 'Sshhh' campaign, designed to encourage students and other drinkers to be more thoughtful when passing through residential areas of town at night, and the Spikeys scheme that saw the distribution of anti-spike bottle tops to on-licensed premises. None of the licensees are aware of the Wired In programme.

Effectiveness of initiatives

Four-fifths or more licensees claim that guidance on the advertising of alcohol, the expansion of the CCTV scheme, high visibility policing, the Think21/Challenge 21 campaigns and enforcement through test purchasing are all effective in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder. Three-quarters say the same about the use of posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials that help inform staff of the issues⁶³.

How effective would you say the [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?						
	Guidance on alcohol advertising	Expansion of CCTV scheme	High visibility policing	Think 21/Challenge 21	Enforcement through test purchasing	Posters, leaflets, DVDs, etc
Very effective	38%	52%	42%	57%	52%	25%
Fairly effective	50%	32%	42%	26%	28%	50%
Not very effective	6%	4%	4%	4%	4%	21%
Not at all effective	-	4%	-	-	-	-
Don't know	6%	8%	12%	13%	16%	4%
Base (those aware) :	16	25	26	23	25	24

Between six and seven out of ten licensees believe that the confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places, the Behave or Be Banned scheme, appearances before the licensing committee, support with identifying fake IDs⁶⁴ and the 'Sshhh' campaign are also effective initiatives.

How effective would you say the [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?					
	Confiscation of alcohol from young people in public places	Behave or be Banned scheme	Appearance before licensing committee review	Support with identifying fake IDs	'Sshhh' campaign
Very effective	40%	43%	15%	19%	20%
Fairly effective	32%	24%	50%	44%	40%
Not very effective	4%	14%	-	25%	20%
Not at all effective	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know	24%	19%	35%	13%	20%
Base (those aware) :	25	21	20	16	10

Of the remaining measures, a relatively high proportion of licensees are unable to comment on their effectiveness even though they are aware of them.

⁶³ 21% suggest the materials are ineffective; comments from licensees range from them not receiving any materials, or receiving materials late into the schemes, to there being too many posters, and messages being inconsistent.

⁶⁴ 25% suggest that support with identifying fake IDs is ineffective either because they have not received any information about this or the information is out of date or insufficient. Additionally one licensee complained that they have not received directives on what to do with fake IDs and whether they should be confiscating them. Consequently young people are being left with them, enabling them to use them again.

How effective would you say the [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?

	Spikeys bottle top scheme	Training courses	Cab Safe scheme	Night Light scheme	Best Bar None Awards
Very effective	-	27%	18%	17%	-
Fairly effective	57%	27%	27%	25%	9%
Not very effective	-	13%	-	8%	27%
Not at all effective	-	-	9%	-	-
Don't know	43%	33%	45%	50%	64%

Base (those aware) : 7 15 11 12 11

Local authority and police initiatives used or participated in

The greatest proportion of licensees claim to have used posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials to inform staff about issues related to underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder. Around half have also participated in the Think 21/ Challenge 21 campaigns and the Behave or Be Banned campaign.

Which of the following local authority and police initiatives and tools have you used or participated in?

Posters, leaflets, DVDs and other materials that inform staff	59%
Think 21/Challenge 21	53%
Behave or Be Banned campaign*	50%
Expansion of CCTV schemes (plus radio links and Pubwatch for on-sales premises)	44%
Cab Safe scheme*	41%
Guidance on alcohol advertising in licensed premise	31%
'Sshhh' Campaign	31%
Best Bar None Awards*	27%
Appearance before local authority licensing committee for review of premises' licence	19%
Support with the identification of fake ID	19%
Training course	16%
Spikeys, anti-spike bottle tops*	9%
None of these	3%

* Asked to on-sales premises only; sample size 22

Base: 32

Head office related support

Amongst licensees who are part of a chain or franchise, 80% receive support from their head office in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder. They claim they receive training and video briefings, and are required to sign policy and procedure notices.

Informed of progress and successes of local initiatives and support offered

54% of licensees feel they are kept well informed of the progress and successes of the initiatives in Aberystwyth. However, 30% feel they are ill-informed.

60% feel well supported by the local authority and police, though licensees suggest they could further their support by being more visible, visiting them more regularly and building relationships with them. They also call for their enforcement authorities to give them more information about the various initiatives and to provide updates as appropriate.

How well informed to you feel about the progress and successes of the initiatives in Aberystwyth?				
How well do you feel the police and local authority support you in dealing with issues around underage sales of alcohol and crime and disorder?				
Very well informed	27%		Very well supported	39%
Fairly well informed	27%		Fairly well supported	21%
Neither	15%		Neither	9%
Fairly ill-informed	21%		Fairly poorly supported	12%
Very ill-informed	9%		Very poorly supported	6%
Don't know	-		Don't know/Can't say	12%

Base: 33

Base: 33

Looking wider at what else the local authority and police could be doing to tackle issues around underage access to alcohol and crime and disorder in the community, licensees make a number of suggestions including encouraging greater parental involvement, taking more formal action against those young people who try to buy alcohol and increasing test purchasing and enforcement activities.

Measures that can assist businesses in the future

Guidance on how to spot fake IDs and having the contact telephone number of enforcement officers who can attend premises when an underage purchase is attempted could assist licensees in future.

Which of the following could help your business avoid selling alcohol in the future to persons under the age of 18?	
Guidance on how to identify fake IDs	79%
Having a contact telephone number of enforcement officers	70%
More promotional material informing customers about underage sales	55%
Guidance on refusing sales to young people	48%
Better understanding of legislation	36%
Enforcement officers in premises to help staff when young people try to buy	30%
None of these	6%
Don't know	3%

Base: 33

In terms of preventing adults from buying alcohol for young people, licensees claim to remain vigilant when serving adult customers and to keep a close eye on those accompanied by under 18s. They are, however, unaware of any initiatives instigated by their enforcement authorities.

Test purchasing

When questioned about test purchasing just three licensees or their staff (9%) claim they have been found to have sold alcohol to persons under the age of 18 in the last two years. One licensee received a formal caution, one received a fixed penalty notice and an informal caution and one just a fixed penalty notice.

Which of the following actions were taken against your business or staff when found to have sold alcohol to a person under the age of 18?	
Fixed penalty notice	67%
Informal caution	33%
Formal caution	33%
Court appearance	-
Licensing review	-
No action taken	-
Don't know/Can't say	-

Base: 3

When asked the action they think would follow a repeat offence, one suggests a fixed penalty notice and a formal caution, one just a fixed penalty notice, and one an informal caution.

Action(s) that would be taken if found to be selling alcohol to under 18's

Of those who claim not to have been found selling alcohol to under 18's in the last two years, most feel they (or their staff) would face a fixed penalty notice if they were found to be doing so.

What do you think would happen to your business if you were found to sell alcohol to a person under the age of 18?⁶⁵	
Fixed penalty notice	54%
Licensing review	36%
Informal caution	14%
Formal caution	4%
Court appearance	14%
No action taken	4%
Asked to attend an Age Related Products training course	-
Don't know	11%

Base: 28

⁶⁵ Spontaneous answers

When prompted with a list of possible actions that might be taken against them and asked to select just ONE action, 24% feel they would face a licensing review whilst 21% feel they would be invited to attend an Age Related Products training course.

Which ONE of the following do you think would be most likely to happen to your business if you were found to sell alcohol to a person under the age of 18?	
Licensing review	24%
Asked to attend an Age Related Products training course	21%
Fixed penalty notice	17%
Informal caution	14%
Formal caution	14%
Court appearance	-
No action taken	-
Don't know	10%

Base: 29

Views on Age Restricted Products training courses

It was explained to licensees that some local authorities offer attendance at an Age Restricted Products training course to those found to have sold alcohol to under 18's as an alternative to having formal action taken against them. The charge for the course would be similar to the cost of a fixed penalty notice.

When asked their views, 73% of licensees feel this approach could be effective in discouraging businesses from selling alcohol to persons under the age of 18.

Measures in premises

64% of licensees have CCTV on their premises, 42% use a sales refusal book and 33% have till prompts to help them combat the sale of alcohol to those under 18 and alcohol-related crime and disorder. 30% of licensees have none of these measures on their premises.

Summary evaluation for Aberystwyth

The town of Aberystwyth has over 115 licensed premises and a university that attracts over 8,000 students, making up a significant proportion of its total population. In order to tackle the perception that the town was becoming a no-go area at night, Ceredigion Community Safety Partnership set up a Night Time Economy project in 2008. This project brought together licensees, the police, council services, representatives from the community, the university and the taxi trade in order to identify the problems in the town and agree solutions. The actions that flow from this project are aimed at ensuring that people conduct themselves properly in the town at night and at reducing anti-social behaviour.

Of all the initiatives that are in place across the town it is 'Behave or be Banned' that the greatest proportion of licensees are aware of and attract relatively high levels of participation. This perhaps is not a surprise given that the most commonly identified problem in the town is night time noise followed closely by public disorder incidents.

Together with the other initiatives, it is claimed that the Night Time Economy project has been successful in reducing overall levels of crime and disorder, alcohol-related admissions to the A&E unit, noise and levels of complaints. However, one area that would benefit from further action is the dissemination of information relating to these successes and the progress achieved. Licensees' views are somewhat mixed when considering the communication they receive, with 54% claiming they are kept well informed compared with 30% who feel ill-informed. Although recognising that this project is in its infancy, licensees suggest that the local authorities could further their support by being more visible, visiting them more regularly and building relationships with them. They also call for their enforcement authorities to give them more information about the various initiatives and to provide updates as appropriate.

In terms of underage sales of alcohol, a high proportion of licensees surveyed have identified young people trying to buy alcohol as a problem in their area. All licensees have received a booklet – "Saying No to Underage Sales" and are encouraged to adopt the Challenge 21 scheme, although compliance checks through test purchasing do not appear to have the same priority as noise or anti-social behaviour, with only 24 attempted test purchases during 2008.

While proof of age cards have been issued free of charge to school and college students in the area, and licensees are conscious that fake IDs are an issue and that they need help identifying them, it has not been possible to offer free cards to the university students given the available budget and the large numbers involved. There is no evidence to indicate that students would be willing to pay for a proof of age card. It is disappointing that an opportunity to adopt a more holistic approach and offer all young people in the town a proof of age card cannot be taken up due to funding restrictions. This, together with the other campaigns in the town to prevent underage sales of alcohol, could have helped drive up the levels of compliance from the current 60%.

Licensing Evaluation Study of the Under 21 Ban

Background to the Under 21 Ban

Project overview

The Challenge 21 campaign was first introduced into pubs across the UK in December 2005 to raise awareness of underage sales of alcohol amongst publicans, staff and customers⁶⁶. Off-licences and supermarkets introduced the Think 21 campaign, which is widely recognised and requires anyone who looks younger than 21 to produce a form of identification to prove they are aged 18 or over when purchasing alcohol.



The Under 21 Ban started as a solution to a problem raised by a retailer in Saltburn by the Sea, who was concerned at the number of youths hanging around his store and intimidating customers and shop staff.

A ban on alcohol sales to under 21s was suggested, and following consultation with other off-licences in the area, in March 2006, Cleveland Police commenced a 10 week, voluntary scheme to ban the sale of alcohol to anyone under the age of 21 years on Fridays and Saturdays between the hours of 18:00 and 23:00 hours in the town of Saltburn by the Sea.

This scheme's objectives were to reduce the amount of alcohol in the hands of youths under 18 years of age and in turn reduce anti-social behaviour, public disorder and low level crime, and increase public confidence.

The Police reported a reduction in complaints about nuisance and rowdiness and a reduction in the quantity of alcohol seized from young people on the street. The shopkeepers reported no significant loss in sales⁶⁷ and at a meeting in June 2006 were supportive of the scheme continuing.

The original model tested in Saltburn was then adapted and trialled by three other areas: Armadale, Stenhousemuir and Hampshire. The feedback from the pilots is that this is a low cost scheme popular amongst participating licensees, Trading Standards and the Police. The scheme is easy to administer and quickly impacts perceptions of the risk of youth and alcohol-related anti-social behaviour in the community. The various pilots provided statistical and anecdotal evidence of varying levels of quality to support this view.

In most cases licensees opted to continue the scheme beyond the pilot. However, certain large retailers were not keen to support the initiative. The success of the scheme depends on full local participation and support from licensees and other relevant bodies. In Scotland the approach is being considered by the Parliament for incorporating into legislation.

⁶⁶ Source: British Beer & Pub Association

⁶⁷ Cleveland Police Press release:
http://www.cleveland.police.uk/policing_cleveland/districts/langbaurgh/nightsafe/u21_ban.htm

Background issues

In Redcar and Cleveland's Sustainable Communities Strategy 2008-11⁶⁸, 65% of residents surveyed said that the reduction of crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse are the things that are key to making Redcar and Cleveland a better place to live, work and visit.

The National Indicators included in Redcar and Cleveland's local area agreement⁶⁹ are:

LAA Indicator	Baseline	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	Partners who have signed up to the targets
NI 17 Perception of Anti-Social Behaviour	35% (2006/07)	33%	32%	31%	RCBC; Cleveland Police; Cleveland Police Authority; REPCT; Cleveland Fire & Rescue Service
NI 20 Assault with injury crime rate	8.57 (2007/08)	8.14	7.94	7.84	RCBC; Cleveland Police; Cleveland Police Authority; REPCT; Cleveland Fire & Rescue Service

The Story of Place⁷⁰ mentions "Reducing alcohol-related violent offences" as being a key challenge for Redcar and Cleveland Borough. The report goes on to state: "Between October 2006 and September 2007 over a third of all violent crime offences reported to the Police have been committed whilst the perpetrator was under the influence of alcohol. Analysis undertaken on times and locations of recorded crimes has highlighted that offences related to the night-time economy account for the highest proportion of violent offences. Nearly 24% of adults are estimated to binge drink." Further, within the same report it is identified that alcohol-related deaths have doubled over the last 10 years.

Whilst these figures are provided for Redcar and Cleveland, the issues they raise appear to be consistent problems across all of the areas where the Scheme was trialled.

Comparison of the pilots areas

• Redcar and Cleveland

- Original trial in Saltburn
- 10 week voluntary trial amongst five off-sale retailers in March 2006
- Limiting off-sales to over 21s for Friday and Saturday evenings between 18.00 and 23.00
- Scheme supported by local poster campaign
- Participating retailers reported no loss of turnover
- Participating retailers volunteered to continue the process beyond the trial
- Scheme has now been rolled-out to off-licences in other towns (Marske, Boosbeck, Skelton, Guisborough, New Marske, Brotton and Loftus)
- Levels of alcohol-related, anti-social behaviour amongst under 18 drinkers were perceived to have dropped during the trial

⁶⁸ Redcar and Cleveland Sustainable Communities Strategy:
<http://www.rclsp.co.uk/sustainablecommunitystrategy.php>

⁶⁹ See Appendix 1 for the rationale of each indicator

⁷⁰ Redcar & Cleveland Council document:
[http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/main.nsf/1E8030617C99389680257447003A461A/\\$FILE/RC-LAA-Story-of-Place.pdf](http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/main.nsf/1E8030617C99389680257447003A461A/$FILE/RC-LAA-Story-of-Place.pdf)

- **Armadale, West Lothian**

- Trial in Armadale, named Operation Faradize
- 6 week trial went live on 28 March 2008 in eleven off-sale retailers
- Limiting off-sales to over 21s for Friday and Saturday evenings between 17.00 and 22.00
- Scheme supported by local poster campaign
- Test-purchasing of alcohol by young people to measure compliance
- Operation Floorsweep/Floorwalk designed to apprehend youths drinking or under the influence, take them to the police station as a place of safety, contact their parents, discuss how the youth came to be in possession of alcohol with parents and youth, and then to provide relevant referrals to support the youth
- Participating retailers reported no loss of turnover, and noted that there were more visits in the evenings from elderly customers and single adults
- Two weeks into the trial, two other villages requested to participate bringing the number of participating stores up to fourteen
- Scheme self managed by licensees with business as usual support from local police
- Following the pilot, licensees were positive and voiced an interest in continuing with the ban although two premises that were part of a larger chain of shops were instructed by their management structures not to continue with any extension of the project

- **Stenhousemuir**

- Trial in Stenhousemuir
- 6 month voluntary trial of the Under 21 Ban amongst ten of the fourteen local off-sale retailers in April 2008
- A bottle-marking scheme introduced which allowed bottles to be traced back to retailers amongst thirteen of the fourteen local off-sale retailers
- Limiting off-sales to over 21s for Friday and Saturday evenings between 16.00 and 22.00
- Anyone under 25 required to provide proof of age
- Scheme supported by local poster campaign, and an educational awareness programme at the local school.
- A “ring-round” early warning scheme allowing retailers to warn each other of gangs of youths on their way and for sharing intelligence
- Test-purchasing of alcohol by young people to measure compliance (although this was not used for the duration of the pilot due to the high levels of retailer compliance)
- Provision of surveillance on suspect individuals and premises (although there was no need to resort to this)
- Participating retailers reported no loss of turnover
- Participating retailers volunteered to continue the process beyond the trial
- After approximately three months, shops with off-sales in other local villages asked to join the scheme adding another six shops to the pilot (although the head office of three retailers instructed them not to participate in the Under 21 scheme, these still participated in the bottle marking scheme)
- Levels of alcohol-related, anti-social behaviour amongst under 18 drinkers were perceived to have dropped during the trial, actual numbers of calls relating to anti-social behaviour dropped by 40% in the first 3 months, and a total reduction by 16% for the whole duration of the trial

- **Hampshire**

- Trial in Coxford area of Southampton, which was then extended to include Stubbington, Fareham but with a minimum age of 25
- A voluntary trial amongst fifteen local off-sale retailers in Coxford September 2008
- Limiting off-sales to over 21s for Friday and Saturday evenings between 18.00 and 23.00
- However, a major retailer originally part of the scheme withdrew before the pilot started
- Scheme supported by local poster campaign although this was kept low key due to the major supermarket withdrawing from the trial
- In November, the Hampshire Police press office produced a press release promoting the approach, which resulted in other major supermarkets withdrawing from the scheme due to fear about anti-competitiveness. Consequently the trial has been suspended until the matter can be resolved.
- Participating retailers reported no loss of turnover
- Participating retailers volunteered to continue the process beyond the trial
- Levels of alcohol related, anti-social behaviour amongst under 18 drinkers were seen to have dropped during the first 6 weeks of the trial

Fuller details of each the pilot area schemes can be found in the Case Study Evaluation Appendices – Appendix E1.

Benefits of the schemes

Anti-social behaviour levels. There is still a need to formally quantify the benefits of the scheme in terms of the reduction in actual levels of alcohol-related anti-social behaviour amongst young people as there are variable /limited statistics available. Also it is difficult to assess the impact of the scheme, when in some cases it was running in conjunction with other programmes designed to have a similar effect on anti-social behaviour. Nevertheless, local feedback from the trials indicates that participants perceived there to be an improvement. The Police in Redcar and Cleveland reported that whilst running, demand on their Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) reduced.

In Scotland, the outcome of the scheme consultation was published in March 2009 in the Scottish Government's paper, "Changing Scotland's Relationship with Alcohol: A Framework for Action"⁷¹. In relation to raising the minimum age, the Scottish Government is proposing to legislate and to place a duty on Licensing Boards to consider raising the minimum age for off-sales purchases within all or part of their area to 21 when they are reviewing their licensing policy statements.

Awareness of issues. Raised awareness amongst retailers and young people of problems associated with young people having access to alcohol

In Armadale, Operation Floorwalk/Floorsweep has resulted in young people caught in the street with alcohol either no longer drinking or reducing the amount they drink. It has also involved the parents of those caught.

In Stenhousemuir the scheme was promoted in the local High School to increase engagement with young people.

In Stenhousemuir levels of alcohol being bought and passed to underage drinkers has reduced, and where this occurs bottles can be traced back to the originating store.

Minimal cost. In terms of training, the rules and boundaries of the scheme were felt to be quite simple and were therefore passed to retailers by word of mouth. No written materials or

⁷¹ Changing Scotland's Relationship with Alcohol: A Framework for Action
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/03/04144703/0>

additional training were considered necessary. There were either no, or very marginal additional costs incurred in implementing the ban.

Obstacles

There have been very few obstacles to the success of the scheme. However as the pilot has come into the national spotlight, significant resistance has been encountered from larger retail stores and student bodies.

Voluntary status. It is generally agreed that Under 21 prohibitions can only be effective in an area when all premises voluntarily participate or are compelled to do so by legislation. For example, in Greater Eston some of the off-licences agreed to a scheme but others flatly refused citing lost profits or potential abuse from 18 to 21 year olds. As a partial ban was felt likely to be ineffective and also unfair to those retailers prepared to take part, the scheme did not go ahead.

All participants enforcing Under-21 Ban. Complete enforcement of the scheme is required for its complete success. In the West-Dyke ward of Redcar the scheme collapsed as a result of one shop allegedly making sales to under 21's who had been refused at neighbouring shops. Clearly, for the scheme to work, it is important that all off-licenses in the area participate and trust each other to abide by the agreed rules.

Dispersal issue. Whilst the risk of dispersing young people to other nearby towns to obtain alcohol during the pilots was mentioned, the areas selected were somewhat isolated with a view to avoiding this risk. Also there was no evidence from the pilots that dispersal was an issue.

Lessons learnt

Communication prior to the launch of the scheme. Redcar and Cleveland suggest that it should have sought out every party with any sort of interest in the off-licence trade. To ensure a scheme's success, they have argued that it is paramount that all who may be affected are consulted and have an opportunity to contribute to its design and implementation.

Stenhousemuir's experiences also indicated that it was important for participating retailers to be very clear about what the scheme entailed and what levels of support they could expect from their community officers.

Monitoring. It is also argued that it is vital that all members of the scheme are closely monitored and supported and that regular reviews take place. Using the local authority Anti-Social Behaviour officers, who provide a partnership slant to the scheme, is advantageous and avoids the scheme being seen simply as a Police led initiative.

Test purchasing is one way in which Trading Standards can support compliance. In Armadale, test purchasing proved an effective means for enforcing the law.

Community influence. Ward councillors are also felt to have an important role. In many cases they are able to apply pressure from a community perspective, and therefore should also be involved in the implementation process.

Licensee survey for the Under 21 Ban areas

Background to the business survey

A short telephone survey was undertaken amongst licensees⁷² in Under 21 Ban areas during February 2009 to establish the extent of their awareness of the tools and initiatives being implemented by their local enforcement authorities to prevent underage sales of alcohol and alcohol-related crime and disorder, their effectiveness, usage and participation in the initiatives and those that might help them avoid sales to persons under the age of 18 in the future. It also explored issues around enforcement, whether they had been found to sell to young people, and actions that might be taken against them if they were to offend in the future.

The number of licensees that took part in the survey is relatively small⁷³. 42 participated in all; 23 in Redcar and Cleveland, 8 in Hampshire, 4 in Armadale and 7 in Stenhousemuir. All survey participants sell alcohol for consumption off premises. 19 businesses are independents whilst 23 are part of a chain or franchise.

Awareness, participation and effectiveness of the Under 21 Ban

96% of the licensees⁷⁴ in Redcar and Cleveland that participated in the survey are aware that there is an Under 21 Ban currently operating in their local area. 63% in Hampshire still believe the ban is operating, 50% in Armadale and 29% in Stenhousemuir.

87% of licensees interviewed in Redcar and Cleveland indicate they are participating in the ban. All those aware that a ban had operated in their local area but has since been suspended participated in the initiative.

Is there an Under 21 Ban currently operating in your local area?		
Are you participating in it?		
	Ban currently operating	Licensee participating
Redcar & Cleveland	96%	87%
Hampshire	63%	50%
Armadale	50%	25%
Stenhousemuir	29%	14%

Base: 42 42

Those that are aware of the ban but have elected not to participate have opted out primarily as a result of a directive from their head office.

⁷² The sample database from which licensees were drawn was sourced from Yell.com.

⁷³ Care should be exercised when interpreting data in this report due to the small sample size.

⁷⁴ All but one

The majority of licensees (72%) indicate that the Under 21 Ban has been effective. Those who believe it is ineffective say this primarily because it is a localised ban. Others also complain about national chain stores opting out of the scheme and some small corner shops being less vigilant than perhaps they should. Adults buying alcohol for young people also undermine the ban, they claim.

Overall, how effective [has the ban been] / [was the ban] in your view?	
Very effective	41%
Fairly effective	31%
Not very effective	13%
Not at all effective	13%
Don't know	2%

Base: 39

As a result of the Under 21 Ban, just over half of licensees perceive staff safety and customer safety to have improved. Views are mixed as to whether the ban has resulted in an improvement or worsening of customer numbers, customer spend and profitability, though the majority agree that the ban has had little impact on these.

To what extent [has the ban improved or worsened] / [did the ban improve or worsen] the following?					
	Perceived safety of staff	Perceived safety of customers	Number of customers visiting store	Customer spend	Profitability
Greatly improved	21%	24%	5%	-	-
Slightly improved	34%	29%	11%	13%	11%
Neither	40%	42%	68%	68%	68%
Slightly worsened	-	-	13%	11%	16%
Greatly worsened	3%	-	-	3%	-
Don't know	2%	5%	3%	5%	5%

Base: 38 38 38 38 38

Existence of problems in the ban areas

All of the listed issues are recognised as having been problems in the ban areas. Attempts to buy alcohol, young people congregating around licensed premises and street drinking by young people are all felt to have been a particular problem in the Under 21 Ban areas.

Thinking back over the past two to three years, which of the following problems existed in your local area resulting in the introduction of the ban?	
Young people trying to buy alcohol	85%
Young people congregating around alcohol licensed premises	77%
Street drinking by young people	74%
Number of complaints received around anti-social behaviour	72%
Customers or members of the public being intimidated by young people	69%
Incidence of anti-social behaviour generally amongst young people	69%
Incidence of public disorder	64%
Incidents of adults buying alcohol for young people	64%
Levels of alcohol-related litter (i.e. cans, bottles)	49%
Intimidation and threats to staff	46%
None of these	-
Don't know	15%

Base: 39

Looking at the actual experiences of licensees, verbal abuse and alcohol stolen by young people are particular problems. Almost a fifth of licensees state that they have not experienced any of the listed problems.

Which of the following has your business experienced?	
Verbal abuse of staff	64%
Theft of alcohol by young people	54%
Threats/intimidation of staff	46%
Threats/intimidation of customers	36%
Violence towards staff	13%
None of these	18%

Base: 39

Licenseses' awareness of other initiatives in the ban areas and their effectiveness

Overall 75% of licensees are aware of the Think 21 or 25 campaigns; 74% are specifically aware of Think 21 and 11% Think 25. Just under three quarters are aware of the contact telephone number of enforcement officers who can attend their store should a person under the age of 18 attempt to buy alcohol.

Which of the following initiatives and tools do you think have been introduced by your local authority and the police to help licensed premises address underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?	
The contact telephone number of enforcement officers who can attend the store	74%
Think 21	74%
Business Support Visits	61%
Bottle marking	40%
Enforcement officers in-store to support staff who refuse sales	40%
Staff training externally, away from the store	37%
Think 25	11%
Staff training in-store	5%
None of these	8%

Base: 38

As the table below shows, of the two licensees aware of the in-store staff training given, both believe that the initiative is effective. The Think 21/25 campaigns are seen as effective by 94% of licensees; 57% say they are *very effective*.

How effective would you say [initiative] has been in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder?							
	In-store staff training	Think 21/25	Contact Telephone number	Enforcement officers	External staff training	Business Support Visits	Bottle marking
Very effective	50%	57%	50%	33%	50%	17%	27%
Fairly effective	50%	37%	39%	47%	21%	48%	27%
Not very effective	-	6%	7%	13%	14%	17%	20%
Not at all effective	-	-	-	-	-	4%	7%
Don't know	-	-	4%	7%	14%	13%	20%

Base (those aware) : 2 30 28 15 14 23 15

The bottle marking scheme is seen as effective by 54% of licensees, though 27% feel this initiative is ineffective – mainly due to the lack of feedback received on the progress of this initiative.

Local authority and police initiatives used or participated in

Four-fifths of licensees have participated in the Think 21/25 campaigns; 74% specifically in Think 21 and 9% in Think 25. Having the contact telephone number for enforcement officers who can attend premises when a young person attempts to buy alcohol has also achieved a high level of uptake from licensees.

Which of the following local authority and police initiatives and tools have you used or participated in?	
Think 21 and /or Think 25	80%
Contact telephone of enforcement officers	77%
Business Support Visits	46%
Bottle marking	34%
Staff training externally	31%
Enforcement officers in-store	29%
Staff training in-store	6%
None of these	-

Base: 35

Refusing sales

All licensees believe that they and their staff are confident when required to refuse sales to young people; 71% say very confident and 29% fairly confident. Licensees claim that confidence has been developed through staff training, team working and supportive management, a clear understanding of the personal and business implications of being found to have made a sale to a person under 18 years, having a refusals book enabling the documentation of action, knowledge of the young people in the local community, and a zero tolerance approach to alcohol sales – no ID no sale.

Support from head office and the local enforcement authorities

Those licensees who are part of a chain or franchise all state that they receive support from their head office in dealing with underage sales and alcohol-related crime and disorder. Typically this is in the form of training courses, promotional materials (e.g. posters, leaflets, badges) and, in some cases, test purchasing regimes.

Over four-fifths of licensees (84%) feel that they are well supported by the police and local authority in dealing with issues around underage sales of alcohol and crime and disorder; 34% feel they are *very well supported*. Licensees suggest the authorities could further their support by visiting them more regularly and responding to assistance promptly rather than allowing two or more hours to elapse (though they appreciate this is not always possible they claim that the police are often unable to take action when there is this period of response delay).

Looking wider at what else the local authority and police could be doing to tackle issues around underage access to alcohol and crime and disorder in the community, licensees suggest providing a greater police presence on the streets and around stores, encouraging greater parental involvement, removing alcopops and other similar drinks from store shelves, and providing entertainment outlets and activities for young people to give them an interest and somewhere to go.

Initiatives that can assist businesses in the future

Licensees believe that having the contact telephone number of enforcement officers who can attend premises when an underage purchase is attempted could be useful in the future (though promptness of attendance would need to be considered).

Which of the following could help your business avoid selling alcohol in the future

to persons under the age of 18?	
Having a contact telephone number of enforcement officers	79%
Enforcement officers in premises to help staff when young people try to buy	66%
Guidance on how to identify fake IDs	55%
More promotional material informing customers about underage sales	50%
Guidance on refusing sales to young people	42%
Better understanding of legislation	34%
None of these	11%

Base: 38

Licensees suggest that introducing a national initiative that requires everyone to carry ID would be useful in avoiding sales of alcohol to young people in future. They further suggest introducing the Under 21 Ban nationally, fining young people or their parents for attempted underage sales and increasing police and enforcement officer presence in store and in street.

In terms of preventing adults from buying alcohol for young people, licensees claim to remain vigilant when serving adult customers and to refuse sales if they suspect items are being purchased for a young person. They are, however, generally unaware of any initiatives instigated by their enforcement authorities.

Measures in premises

Sales refusal books are kept by 92% of licensees, 87% have CCTV and 67% utilise till prompts reminding staff to check the age of alcohol purchasers. 5% of premises have none of these measures.

Summary evaluation of the Under 21 Ban

The Under 21 Ban initiative is, or has been, running in Redcar and Cleveland, Armadale, Stenhousemuir and Hampshire and, whilst each area uses different criteria to administer the initiative, all share similar goals; to reduce anti-social behaviour, public disorder and low level crime, and increase public confidence.

The survey of licensees was undertaken with 42 off-licences across Redcar and Cleveland, in the town of Armadale in the Lothian & Borders area of Scotland, Stenhousemuir in Central Scotland and the Coxford area of Southampton in Hampshire. These four areas have introduced voluntary restrictions on the sale of alcohol to anyone under the age of 21 on Friday and Saturday evenings. The initiatives were introduced by the local police to tackle the problem of youths hanging around off-licences on Friday and Saturday evenings and alcohol-related anti-social behaviour. Whilst some bans ran for a pilot period only, others are still operational.

It is encouraging to find from the survey that overall 74% of businesses say that they are still operating an Under 21 Ban, particularly when it requires all the businesses in the area to participate for the ban to be totally effective. 72% of those surveyed feel the ban has been effective. Those not participating in the scheme cite directions from head office as the main reason for non-participation.

Licensees have also welcomed the support from the police with 74% stating that having the telephone number of enforcement officers helps them avoid selling alcohol to under 18's. The police crime statistics show that reported calls about anti-social behaviour have reduced as a result of the bans being in place, although in some of the areas the prior introduction of safer neighbourhood police teams may have a greater bearing.

The Scottish Government is proposing in the paper, "Changing Scotland's Relationship with Alcohol: A Framework for Action" published in March 2009, to legislate to:

- Place a duty on Licensing Boards to consider raising the minimum age for off-sales purchases within all, or part of their area, to 21 when they are reviewing their licensing policy statements;
- Enable Licensing Boards to apply such a condition without requiring a hearing in respect of all the premises concerned;
- Give the Chief Constables or the local Licensing Forum powers to request that their local Licensing Board consider the matter of an age restriction at any time.

This is an interesting move as the majority of individuals (62%) responding to the consultation expressed opposition to the proposal to raise the minimum age for off-sales to 21. However, this level of opposition has not been evident in the licensee survey where significant proportions of licensed premises in some areas are still participating in a ban despite it having been suspended.

What is evident from the licensee survey is that the introduction of a voluntary Under 21 Ban has had a positive impact on the problems associated with youths hanging around off-licences and that a 'No ID, No sale' initiative has helped achieve this. Indeed, the number of neighbouring villages that subsequently requested participation following the initial trials indicates that young people are moving to perceived 'softer' areas and that these areas wish to also benefit from an Under 21 Ban.

Conclusions and recommendations

Closing remarks

The survey amongst licensees demonstrates an overwhelming desire by the majority of licensees to comply with the Licensing Act 2003 in a co-ordinated approach in which everyone is working together to prevent underage access to alcohol and alcohol-related crime and disorder.

From the licensee surveys it was apparent that young people trying to buy alcohol is the most prevalent problem across the study areas, with refusals resulting in licensed premises staff being verbal abused, intimidated and threatened. These problems have given rise to the use of tools and the development of initiatives to address them by local authorities, the police and other partners.

Licensees have indicated that they wish to be involved in these initiatives, assisting them in complying with legislation as well as contributing to a reduction in anti-social behaviour, an improved working environment for their staff and more favourable shopping environment for their customers.

Awareness of the national Think/Challenge campaign is high, as is participation. Clearly the consistent message behind the Think/Challenge campaign that encourages retailers to refuse sales of age restricted products to anyone who appears to be under the age of 21/25 and does not have an acceptable form of photo identification and the large number of licensed outlets engaging in this campaign is one of its main strengths. By and large it is considered a very effective initiative.

The majority of licensees are also aware of the test purchasing regimes undertaken by their local enforcement authorities though those surveyed in Blackpool, where there is zero tolerance, have by far the greatest awareness. The study has shown that those authorities that are test purchasing at least 15% of their licensed premises annually are achieving a higher level of compliance than those that undertake a far lower number, although it is recognised that compliance figures can be influenced by how premises are targeted, the appearance of purchasers and confidence of staff to challenge.

These test purchase exercises are generally readily accepted and felt to be effective although there is a minority of licensees who are critical of them. Their effectiveness is questioned where the volunteers used or the circumstances of the purchase have made it obvious that it is a test purchase activity or where the exercise has been leaked so staff are on their guard. Effectiveness is also questioned when premises caught selling to underage volunteers are not perceived to be adequately punished; this is considered very unfair and unjust on those who stick rigidly to requiring ID from young people before making a sale.

Then there are those licensees that would prefer the resources to be used to help them prevent sales in-store and to catch proxy purchasers, and there are also those who argue that test purchasing is an attempt by the enforcement authorities to catch them out, especially where volunteers look over the age of 18. These licensees are clearly not as engaged with the Think/Challenge campaigns as they might like to believe and have clearly not bought into the message 'no ID, no sale'.

Comments around justness and fairness of punishments and trading environments arose in the licensee surveys on a number of occasions. As described above, licensees working hard to comply with legislation and turning away sales want to see those who are being less vigilant

caught and appropriately punished. They also want fairness; all premises competing on a level playing field. This is especially relevant in the Under 21 Ban areas, where no one premises should be permitted to opt out of the initiative and achieve financial gain at the expense of others. The lack of fairness and justness simply leads to resentment and a breakdown in the participation of the schemes, as seen in the West Dyke ward of Redcar.

The Under 21 Bans have been effective as a quick solution to reducing the number of young people hanging around off-license premises on Friday and Saturday evenings, and reducing anti-social behaviour. Formed in tight geographical areas (restricted to suburbs of larger towns and cities or small easily defined areas within towns), the bans have been most effective when all licensees in off-sales premises have agreed to take part. However, these measures can create dispersion problems for other areas and this is highlighted by the number of surrounding towns and communities that subsequently requested participation in the schemes. Effectiveness has undoubtedly been improved when coupled with other initiatives, such as the introduction of Neighbourhood Police Teams and more robust enforcement against anyone caught buying, selling or having alcohol about them in a public place. It will be interesting to see how local Licensing Boards in Scotland respond to the Scottish Government proposals requiring them to consider raising the minimum age to 21 years for off-sales purchases within all or part of their area.

Those licensees who feel most informed and supported are those engaged in localised community schemes such as the Cambridge Community Alcohol Project and Under 21 Ban. It is evident that licensees welcome support from the enforcement authorities; where there is enforcement activity in their area levels of anti-social behaviour has been reduced and compliance levels improved. The evaluation has shown that engagement and partnership working can deliver real benefits for the community as a whole. Placing enforcement officers in high risk premises to support licensees and their staff and deter underage alcohol purchase attempts is welcomed, as is having the telephone numbers of enforcement officers working in their locality who can respond quickly to underage purchase attempts. Licensees have also requested more promotional material that can be used to raise awareness and to support them in refusing underage sales of alcohol.

Whilst there is often awareness of those premises in their locality that have failed a test purchase exercise, with local media stories helping to highlight the issues to a wider audience, licensees have also asked to be informed when their premises has been included in a test purchase exercise and found to be compliant. This shows a desire to engage more fully with the regime and receive reassurance that staff are behaving in the correct manner.

There is a general call for an equality of action to underage sales. Remarks from some of the licensees suggest that they resent being penalised for inadvertently making a sale when the young purchasers are getting away unpunished. They feel that the young people attempting purchases should be punished in a more formal way otherwise there is little deterrent to them trying to purchase alcohol again.

Where an underage sale takes place, most licensees think they would be served with a fixed penalty notice, which is not recorded as a criminal conviction. Others think they would be required to attend a licensing review, but very few identified a court appearance as a likely penalty. This is perhaps recognition of how time consuming it can be preparing a matter for court and adherence with the Regulators Compliance Code that has seen underage sales dealt with by way of a fixed penalty notice rather than a court appearance. That said, Blackpool has indicated a move in favour of prosecution and attendance at a licensing review though this message has failed to reach the licensees that formed the basis of this survey.

A statutory defence for an offence of selling alcohol to someone under the age of 18 years is that the seller has taken all reasonable precautions and exercised all due diligence to prevent

an offence being committed. In addition to having other measures in place, a seller should, if they are in any doubt about a purchaser being 18, ask for age related identification, such as a proof of age card, passport or photo driving licence. The issue of proof of age cards was not the subject of this survey, but it goes without saying that young people should have access to a proof of age card that is accredited to the Proof of Age Standards Scheme (PASS). If Community Safety Partnerships are able to fund the issue of these so that they are available to young people at no cost, it would enable such forms of identity to be readily accessible to young people. By working with licensees to enable them to identify fake cards they will have more confidence in the proof of age card and less dependence on young customers producing a passport or photo driving licence. These latter two documents have a street value that could increase the risk of theft to the owner, more so than a proof of age card.

A key to the success of the projects covered through the case studies has been the multi-agency approaches taken. In Aberystwyth the licensed trade, university and various departments in the council were being blamed for the noise and disturbance in the town at night, but once they all met at a stakeholder event, it became apparent that no one sector of the community was to blame. By working together they have been able to put in place actions that are delivering real improvements for the town. Agreement has been made with licensees to notify the police when any large event is due to take place in the town in order that the relevant agencies can put in place plans and resources to deal with it in a proactive manner, rather than having to react to problems as they arise on the night. The role of the Night Time Economy Co-ordinator in this study has been pivotal to its success.

To varying extents, many of the case study areas have involved educational elements as a way of changing the culture of local people and their relationship with alcohol. This holistic approach is to be welcomed as more agencies become involved in increasing compliance of the licensed trade and reducing anti-social behaviour and subsequent injuries that are a drain on the health service. Lancashire, in particular, has taken an expansive educational route to promote cultural change as the basis for its initiatives.

One of the learning outcomes has been that projects can be more effectively delivered with increased financial efficiency when funding is in place prior to delivery. Of the difficulties identified in delivering these multi-agency projects, funding stands out above the rest. Often the success of a project depends on its ability to attract funding from within a local authority, the police, or by way of grant from elsewhere. Unless a project has only a short life, and funding by way of a grant is preferable, the multi-agency projects need to be built into mainstream funding or baseline budgets.

In summary the key recommendations that come from these case studies are that:

- a) Initiatives should be developed and implemented through collaborative working with all parties that have an interest in preventing underage access to alcohol and alcohol-related crime and disorder, including licensees.
- b) All parties should be kept informed of the progress and successes of initiatives including the outcomes of compliant test purchases
- c) Licensees should also be regularly reminded of the support available from the police and enforcement officers to overcome specific problems and encouraged to use it.
- d) Licensees should be advised when enforcement officers are working in their area and they should call in, even if it is briefly, to raise their awareness and visibility.
- e) Proof of age cards should be readily available within local communities, free of charge, to give the cards the focus licensees require and to marginalise fake IDs
- f) More extensive training should also be available to licensees on how to identify fake ID's.

- g) Greater efforts need to be made by enforcing authorities to clamp down on proxy sales
- h) Licensees should be provided with promotional materials that support them in avoiding underage sales
- i) Adequate funding needs to be identified to support multi-agency projects prior to service delivery;

Appendix

Appendix 1 - National Indicators

Rationale of National Indicators⁷⁵

- **NI 15: Serious violent crime rate**
Rationale: Local authorities have a role to play in tackling the causes of serious violent crime (e.g. town centre planning to reduce alcohol related violence). This indicator records the rate of serious violent crime per 1000 of the population. Serious violent crime includes: Homicide and Child Destruction; Attempted Murder; Wounding or other act endangering life; Grievous Bodily Harm without intent (including racially and religiously aggravated); Causing Death by Dangerous Driving; Causing Death by Careless Driving when under the influence of drink or drugs; Causing Death by Careless or Inconsiderate Driving and Causing Death by Aggravated Vehicle Taking.
- **NI 16: Serious acquisitive crime rate**
Rationale: Local authorities have a role to play in securing and designing environments to reduce opportunities for acquisitive crime (e.g. car park security, alley-gating and security of public spaces). This indicator records the rate of serious acquisitive crime per 1000 of the population. Serious acquisitive crime includes: Burglary in a dwelling; Aggravated burglary in a dwelling; Robbery of Business Property; Robbery of Personal Property; Theft or Unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle; Aggravated Vehicle Taking and Theft from a Vehicle.
- **NI 17: Perceptions of anti-social behaviour**
Rationale: Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is a high profile national priority for Government. Local authorities are the key partner in tackling ASB and have statutory duties to enforce ASB legislation. They are an applicant agency for Anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs), they lead on housing-related ASB, tackling litter/graffiti, and are responsible for licensing of premises and in securing and designing environments to reduce likelihood of alcohol-fuelled disorder and ASB. This indicator records residents' perceptions of ASB in their area.
- **NI 20: Assault with injury crime rate**
Rationale: Activity by police and partners can impact on the level of violent crime, particularly alcohol-related assault. Local authorities have a role to play in managing licensed premises and in securing and designing environments to reduce likelihood of alcohol-fuelled violence (e.g. in design and control of night-time economy, town centre management, working with transport providers and security of public spaces). This indicator measures the rate per 1000 of the population of assaults with less serious injury. This includes Actual bodily harm and other injury and racially or religiously aggravated actual bodily harm and other injury.
- **NI 30: Re-offending rate of prolific and other priority offenders**
Rationale: Measuring the offending rates of this group of offenders will provide an explicit incentive for local delivery partners to ensure interventions for the target group are focused on achieving a reduction in offending.
- **NI 32: Repeat incidents of domestic violence, for introduction within APACS in 2009/10 when complete coverage is achieved.**

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Source: Communities & Local Government Local Priorities Website
<http://www.localpriorities.communities.gov.uk/LAAResults.aspx>
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/doc/517909.doc>

Appendix 1 - National Indicators

Rationale: Activity by police and local partners should be focused on protecting the most vulnerable victims from serious harm. Domestic violence (DV) victims currently have the highest level of repeat victimisation, often with the severity of incidents escalating over time. This indicator is proposed as the percentage reduction in repeat victimisation for those domestic violence cases being managed by a MARAC. Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARACs) focus on high risk victims of DV as indicated through the use of risk assessment tools. By sharing information, agencies get a better picture of victims' situations and so develop responses that are tailored to the needs and goals of individual victims and their children. Safe information-sharing also allows agencies to manage the perpetrator in ways that reduce risk. The aim of the MARAC is to construct jointly and implement a risk management plan that provides professional support to all those at risk and that reduces the risk of harm and to reduce repeat victimisation. The responsibility to take appropriate actions rests with individual agencies; it is not transferred to the MARAC. Local authority services will need to ensure that they have in place a framework to identify those victims at risk and will need to carry out the appropriate risk assessments when presented with victims of domestic violence and their children. Jointly with the police, services commissioned by local authorities and health agencies will have a primary role to play to ensure that the MARAC is an effective process.

- **NI 39: Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates**

Rationale: This indicator measures the rate of alcohol related admissions per 100,000 population using Hospital Episode Statistics. Annual healthcare costs related to alcohol misuse add up to £1.7 billion per year and alcohol-related illness or injury accounts for nearly a million hospital admissions per year and they are increasing. This indicator aims to reduce the trend in the increase of alcohol related hospital admissions. Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) are considered to be sensitive to the impact of prevention interventions – i.e. when prevention interventions are improved, hospital admission for specific chronic and acute conditions should slow in the short, medium and long term. This indicator will therefore measure the impact of prevention interventions, without creating an additional burden for local healthcare organisation.

- **NI 115: Substance misuse by young people**

Rationale: This indicator is designed to measure progress in reducing the proportion of young people frequently misusing substances – including illegal drugs, alcohol and volatile substances such as glue, gas or solvents. Substance misuse by young people is strongly linked with involvement in crime or anti-social behaviour, increased risk of failing at school and damage to both mental and physical health.